# "Putting Out the Fire in Afghanistan"

# The Fire Model of Counterinsurgency: Focusing Efforts to Make an Insurgency Unsustainable

A Monograph

by

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# Abstract

CAN A COUNTERINSURGENCY STRATEGY FOCUS ON ONLY ONE ELEMENT OF AN INSURGENCY AND MAKE THAT INSURGENCY UNSUSTAINABLE? By Major Patrick M. Pascall, 65 pages.

This monograph develops an alternative approach to counterinsurgency, and explains how the current narratives in the field of counterinsurgency are not completely accurate. Counterinsurgents only need to properly understand the environment and then concentrate their efforts in that critical area of the insurgency identified as the sustainer of that insurgency. The U.S. counterinsurgency (COIN) plan does not need to address all those lines of effort not directly related to the root cause of an insurgency, as those efforts may actually fuel the insurgency due to building unrealistic expectations among the populace.

This monograph also develops the analogy that the four elements necessary for a fire (fuel, oxygen, heat, chain reaction) parallel the necessary elements of an insurgency (the fuel representing unresponsive government, oxygen representing existing structures/vulnerability, heat representing political/diplomatic factors, chain reaction representing the information environment, and the population). Like a fire, if one has a proper understanding of the environment, and can clearly identify the true sustainer of the insurgency (the root problem), then one only need to remove that one element from the equation, and that insurgency will be unsustainable.

Having a simple approach will not only allow the counterinsurgents to better utilize their resources- in an Economy of Force- and allow them to Mass their power on one clear Objective, it will also remind counterinsurgents of the other Principle of War that has proven to be so critical in complex environments- simplicity.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

*"Learning is like rowing upstream: not to advance is to drop back."*

-Chinese proverb

The U. S. is wasting much of its energy on counterinsurgency in Afghanistan unnecessarily. This is not because it is not providing enough troops or treasure, but because the U.S. has failed to frame the environment properly, and has not identified the true problem. Thus, the U.S. effort is focused on solving the wrong problems better instead of solving the right problem. This monograph proposes an alternative approach that, when combined with the emerging doctrinal concept of design, focuses on the environment in which the insurgency is operating, identifies the real problem, and once fully framed will allow commanders to focus resources towards that area, and thus place the problematic situation within the zone of tolerance[1] as determined by the strategic guidance. In a nut-shell, the U.S. COIN plan does not need to address those issues not directly related to the root cause of an insurgency, as those efforts may actually fuel the insurgency due to building unrealistic expectations among the populace.

Since the introduction of the first comprehensive book on COIN theory in 1964, David Galula's *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice*, the U.S. had not adapted doctrine, organization or training to the emerging enemy - the insurgent- in any large way since the civil war in El Salvador.[2] Then in the midst of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II, in 2004, U.S. commanders realized they were facing an insurgency - in both Iraq and Afghanistan - and that they needed a new approach. Rather than seeking to understand the current environment, and finding the root causes of the insurgency, the U.S. looked back

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[1] The author defines the zone of tolerance: Usually defined as the range of a commander's perception of a situation between desired and minimum acceptable standards. In essence, it is the range of situational performance that a commander considers satisfactory. Performance below the zone is seen as dissatisfying and performance above the zone is seen as delighting. The importance of this zone of tolerance is that commanders may accept variation within a range of performance, and any increase or decrease in performance within this area will only have a marginal effect on perceptions.

[2] The author had discovered that through his research that the civil war in El Salvador was considered to be the ideal testing ground for low-intensity conflict doctrine that was developed from the, "Joint Low-Intensity Conflict Project" (1986), in which the Headquarters Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, "Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, (1988) doctrine was developed. This was the last major contribution to COIN related doctrine until FM 3-24 in 2006.

in time and tried to use Galula's theory from 1964 as a template, and low-intensity conflict doctrine from

1988 as a guide. The problem was that the insurgent had adapted, and added a different capability since

the 1960s and 1980s. Now the 21st century insurgent was using a more powerful tool that was

traditionally the purview of the state - information. In fact, not only is information no longer dominated

by the state, but the state no longer has control over what is being broadcast, true or untrue, and most

importantly, everyone now has access to the populace through the information domain. The U.S. had not

fought a "hands on" insurgency since Vietnam, an experience it did not want to revisit. In effect, the U.S.

misused Galula, did not learn from the CORDS[3] experience, and ultimately missed the opportunity to

interdict the insurgency that ended up preying on the vulnerable populations in both Afghanistan and Iraq.

Instead of understanding the environment, the U.S. over-adapted old theory and began using all

of the assets available to it (PMES-II: political, military, economic, social, infrastructure and information)

without proper coordination or properly understanding the problem (the root cause of the insurgency).

The U.S. busied itself by building schools, roads and the like because it did not have a good

understanding of COIN operations, and it seemed the moral thing to do.

Current counterinsurgency thinking is that one must have several lines of effort,[4] all working

along several different slices[5] simultaneously, in order to be successful in COIN. However, if COIN

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[3] U.S. advisors to the Vietnamese government were developing their own version of COIN doctrine based on the National Security Action Memorandum (NSAM) Number 124, signed by President Kennedy in January 1962, and NSAM Number 182, signed in August of that same year, establishing the basis of U.S. counterinsurgency doctrine, http://www.jfklibrary.org/Asset+Tree/Asset+Viewers/Image+Asset+Viewer.htm?guid={392A0BA7-BFF6-4A60-A0AE-1E7C3E00A321}&type=mpd (accessed June, 2009). Specifically, in 1967, the U.S. established the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) program. CORDS established a single manager for Pacification in South Vietnam. The main objective of CORDS was to coordinate all of the resources at the government's disposal (military, economic, intelligence), under one commander in order to synchronize all activities (Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Doctrine, 1942-1976*, pg4). The idea was simple: if the U.S. could coordinate its numerous resources, then the insurgency would be defeated. Most importantly, the new strategy was population and development focused, rather than enemy focused.

[4] FM 3-0 *Operations,* 6-66. A line of effort links multiple tasks and missions using the logic of purpose-cause and effect-to focus efforts toward establishing operational and strategic conditions.

[5] Jack D. Kem, *Campaign Planning: Tools of the Trade,* 2nd ed. (Fort Leavenworth: United States Army Command and General Staff College, 2007), 36. Slices: operations along the lines of effort that work towards that line of efforts end state or condition.

commanders and planners utilize Design[6] concepts, the proposed methodology (explained in further detail in chapter 3), and also apply the Principals of War[7]that have proven so enduring and applicable even in complex environments, then they can make the insurgency unsustainable. This monograph develops an alternative approach to counterinsurgency, and will explain how the current narratives in the field of counterinsurgency are not completely accurate. Counterinsurgents only need to properly understand the environment, and then concentrate their efforts in that critical area of the insurgency identified as the sustainer of that insurgency.

The primary research question for this research project is, "Can a counterinsurgency strategy focus on only one element of an insurgency and make that insurgency unsustainable?" In order to answer that question, this monograph addresses the secondary questions: What is the basis for current COIN doctrine? What are the current elements of COIN doctrine that can be useful? Finally, what elements of COIN are the most critical to making an insurgency unsustainable, and is there a methodology that can deconstruct the complex environments of insurgency?

The literature concerning insurgency and counterinsurgency operations is extensive in its critiques and prescriptions for individual insurgencies. Although current information is limited from the insurgent side, there is extensive information from the counterinsurgency side. This monograph describes some of the major works in the field of counterinsurgency, and explain how they may, or may not, fit into the concept being proposed in this monograph.

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[6] FMI 5-2, *Design*: Design is a way of organizing conceptual work within a command to assist the commander in his formulation of operational concepts. Design assists the commander in leading adaptive work and underpins and guides planning, execution, assessment, and revision of organizational schemes of action.

[7] The counterinsurgent can apply the Principals of War in COIN. It can concentrate its COIN forces in the critical areas (Mass: Concentrate the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time, FM 3-0*, Operations*, page 4-13.), tailor their COIN efforts in those areas that are not critical to victory (Economy of Force: allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts, FM 3-0 *Operations*, page 4-13,), create a simple plan without all those numerous slices and lines of effort (Simplicity: Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders to ensure thorough understanding, FM 3-0*, Operations*, page 4-15). Everything in war is very simple, but the simple thing is difficult. To the uninitiated, military operations are not difficult. Simplicity contributes to successful operations. Simple plans and clear, concise orders minimize misunderstanding and confusion. Other factors being equal, parsimony is to be preferred, and develop a clear objective by focusing the counterinsurgents desired end state (Objective: Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective, FM 3-0*, Operations*, page 4-12).

This monograph is organized into five chapters. Chapter 2 demonstrates how the United States has misused COIN theory, and missed opportunities while attempting COIN operations dating back to the Vietnam War, and explains why new thinking is needed at this time. Chapter 3 introduces, defines and describes the new COIN model of the "Fire Model of Insurgency" by its core elements: the fuel to insurgency, of Unresponsive Government, the heat that ignites the fuel of Political-Diplomatic friction, the oxygen sustaining the insurgency of the Structures and Vulnerabilities within society, and finally information and the populace itself as those elements perpetuating the insurgency and thus the sustainer of the insurgency. Chapter 4 examines the insurgency in Afghanistan and applies design concepts and the Fire Model of Insurgency theory, utilizing the environmental frame and problem frame developed by this researcher's seminar at the School for Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) between January and July of 2009. This gives an example of how the Fire Model of Insurgency concept can be applied to a relevant and critical complex problem that currently faces the U.S. The goal is to introduce a new COIN methodology that will help the COIN operators be more successful against insurgents of the 21$^{st}$ century, and to find a better way to fight a growing trend in warfare today, insurgency, and to help the operators in the field develop solutions that will be enduring. Chapter 5 synthesizes the results from the previous chapters, determines the benefits of this new approach to planners and practitioners, and addresses concerns that may arise from using either the "Fire Model of Insurgency" or design concepts. Finally, this monograph then provides recommendations for possible future use of these concepts based on the findings and analysis.

With a proper understanding of the environment, and clearly identifying the true sustainer of the insurgency (the root problem), counterinsurgents only need to remove that single element from the equation, and the insurgency will be unsustainable. There will be no need to have numerous agencies and thousands of forces spread throughout the battlefield trying to address everything a counterinsurgent can possibly think of. Energies will be saved, funds will be better spent, and the U.S. can focus on the real threat at hand - preventing the next attack on our homeland.

# CHAPTER 2: Review and Critique of Traditional COIN Theory and Doctrine

*"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew."*

-President Abraham Lincoln[8]

Although there are some enduring principals to counterinsurgency[9], there are also some gaps that need to be filled since the development of traditional COIN doctrine in the 1960s. This chapter first explains some of the shortcomings of David Galula's book on COIN theory by pointing out its contradictions, and its non-applicability to the current COIN fight. Second, it discusses the shortcomings of Army COIN doctrine FM 3-24 *Counterinsurgency*, which has led our COIN operators astray in their understanding of what is necessary for a successful outcome. Lastly, it explains why the U.S. should not completely discard current theory and doctrine, but understand its limitations, and adjust counterinsurgency strategy to address not only the environment itself, but also the root cause of that insurgency.

The Principals of War are enduring across the spectrum of conflict whether it is a conventional battle or a counterinsurgency. For example, the COIN force can concentrate its forces in critical areas (Mass[10]), tailor their COIN efforts in those areas that are not critical to victory (Economy of Force[11]), create a simple plan without numerous lines of effort[12] (Simplicity[13]), and develop a clear objective by

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[8] Abraham Lincoln, "Annual Message to Congress," *Collection of works of Abraham Lincoln* 5 (Washington, D.C., December 1, 1862).

[9] For example: Populace support can sustain the insurgency or assist the counterinsurgent. There is always a cause or grievance that causes an insurgency to begin.

[10] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-13. Concentrate the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time.

[11] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-13. Allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts.

[12] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 6-66.

[13] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-15. Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders to ensure thorough understanding.

focusing the counterinsurgents desired end state (Objective[14]). We can learn from history, and apply new thinking and emerging doctrine to better manage the problematic situations that we continue to face. In COIN, as in conventional war, having a clearly defined approach will not only allow us to better utilize our resources, but remind us of how enduring the Principals of War are. However, the work of David Galula, which most current COIN doctrine is based on, seems to ignore these Principals of War, whereas FM-3-24, although using the terms of the Principals of War, marginalizes their importance by mixing them in with the narrative.

David Galula states in the introduction to his 1964 book that, "Revolutionary war… has its special rules, different from those of conventional war."[15] Later in the book, however, he contradicts himself by mentioning at least three of the principals of war that are very applicable to COIN. For example, on page 55, while discussing his fourth law[16] pertaining to intensity of efforts he states, "They require a large concentration of efforts, resources and personnel. This means that the efforts cannot be diluted all over the country, but must be applied successively area by area." The counterinsurgent may interpret this as meaning to mass your forces. A second example is found on page 56. He states, "…This strategy thus conforms with the principle of economy of force, a vital one in a war where the insurgent needs so little to achieve so much whereas the counterinsurgent needs so much to achieve so little." In the next sentence, he admits, "While a main effort is made in the selected area, (it is) necessary at some risk to other areas."[17] Last, on page 58, still discussing his fourth law, Galula mentions the importance of another principal of war, simplicity. "Simplicity in concept and in execution are important requirements

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[14] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-12. Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.

[15] David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice* (Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 1967), xii.

[16] Galula, 52-55: According to Galula, there are four "laws" of counterinsurgency: 1. The support of the population is as necessary for the counterinsurgent as the insurgent. 2. Support is gained through an active minority. 3. Support from the populace is conditional. 4. Intensity of efforts and vastness of means are essential.

[17] Galula, 55-56.

for any counterinsurgent doctrine," he writes. The take-away is simple: the rules are not so different after all, and according to Galula the Principals of War are enduring, even in a COIN fight.

Due to the limited scope of this monograph, a complete critique the Army's counterinsurgency doctrine is not possible. However, there are several flaws that need to be addressed to reinforce the need to change the doctrine, and thus change the way U.S.COIN operators are implementing COIN strategy. First, the recurring theme throughout the manual is that "more is better". For example, on page 1-24, it states, "Insurgencies are protracted by nature. Thus COIN operations always demand considerable expenditures of time and resources."[18] Why do COIN operations "always" need considerable expenditures? The statement "always" is questionable at best, and is unsupported in the manual. Additionally, when U.S. COIN doctrine begins its first chapter with that assumption, it sets the counterinsurgent up for the thinking that continues throughout the manual: we will be here for a long time, more is better, and "everyone" must contribute considerable time and treasure. That thinking is incorrect, as has been seen in Iraq. After investing billions of dollars, and sending every U.S. agency available into theater, the U.S. discovered that the root cause of the insurgency was not the fact that Iraq did not have structures of government, or paved roads, but rather it was the internal friction caused by the minority Sunnis being thrown from power, and being targeted by the newly empowered Shia majority. If the U.S. did a better job of framing the environment, it would have understood this, and not have needed to expend all those resources.

The most disturbing statement in the entire manual is probably the one that states, "Effective COIN programs address all aspects of the local populace's concerns in a unified fashion."[19] That is the reason the United States is bogged down in Afghanistan today. The U.S. created Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) where they were not needed,[20] and attempted to address every "minor"

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[18] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency,* 1-24.

[19] FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, 2-2.

[20] For example, in Konduz, Afghanistan, the residents, where the author was located in 2002, were content with their current conditions, and supported the government that was being established. That was until the PRT

grievance, which in reality was impossible. This then created unrealistic expectations within the populace, and therefore the U.S. military ended up actually working against COIN strategy by alienating the very population they wanted to win over-or in some areas had already won over as in Konduz, Afghanistan in the northeast .

In contradiction to most previous COIN theory and doctrine,[21]FM 3-24 states, "By default, U.S. and multinational military forces often possess the only readily available capability to meet many of the local populace's fundamental needs." Again, without further description of what that means, it may entice a COIN operator to think that they are responsible for all the fundamental needs of the populace, and that can be a slippery slope. In fact, this thinking is reinforced throughout the manual, especially in chapter 5. On page 5-5, it gives an example of Logical Lines of Operations[22] that includes almost everything under the sun: borders, crime, recruiting, trash, electrical, schools, medical clinics, governance, justice systems, economic activity, etc.. The chapter is filled with examples of the many things a counterinsurgent could do, leading again to the misinterpretation that a counterinsurgent must do everything.

Finally, FM 3-24 touts the "clear, hold, build" concept. The concept initially sounds workable: clear an area of insurgents (if you know who they are), hold it (if you have enough host nation (HN) or coalition troops), and build (some areas do not need anything built). The initial problem with this concept is that the insurgent is elusive, ever moving and striking, and does not actually have to hold terrain in

concept was introduced, and some U.S. officials from Kabul promised bridges, roads, and even a hospital that was not needed. This resulted in disruption of the traditional systems of the economy, and created expectations among the populace that would never be realized and thus alienated many locals.

[21] T.E. Lawrence, *The Arab Bulletin*, no. 15, August 20, 1917, *"27 Articles of Advice,"*." Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably than that you do it perfectly. It is their war, and you are to help them, not to win it for them. Actually, also, under the very odd conditions of Arabia, your practical work will not be as good as, perhaps, you think it is.", 12.

[22] Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 316. Logical Lines of Operation: A logical line that connects actions on nodes and/or decisive points in time and purpose with an objective(s).

order to control it.[23] Second, if, to be successful, the counterinsurgent is holding ground, does that make the counterinsurgent enemy focused, terrain focused, or populace focused? Last, what does the counterinsurgent intend to build? Again, this concept promotes the idea that "something" needs to be built. The counterinsurgents therefore begin to look for measurable, quantifiable things they can do to ensure that they have fulfilled the concept. In fact, FM 3-24 defines Measure of Performance (MOP) and Measures of Effectiveness (MOE)[24] on the final page of chapter 5, a fitting way to close the chapter on executing counterinsurgency operations.

FM 3-24 is mostly based on the writings of David Galula, whose thinking was very much influenced by the teachings of Mao Zedong, a communistic guerilla fighter from the 1930's, and therefore has some serious flaws that need to be resolved[25]. For example, FM 3-24 takes Galula's basic concepts such as "clear, hold, build," and assumes they can be applied in every insurgency. However, what Galula and thus FM 3-24 are discussing is not necessarily applicable in Afghanistan. For instance, when an insurgency is cleared from areas in Afghanistan, insurgents seem to still maintain mental and moral control over citizens living in the area[26]. Therefore, the hold and build parts of the concept are nebulous.

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[23] JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 269. Insurgency: An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through the use of subversion and armed conflict (per *JP 1-02*).

[24] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-27. Measure of Performance: is a criterion used to assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that is tied to measuring the attainment of an end state, achievement of an objective, or creation of an effect (*JP 1-10*). Was the task or action performed? Measure of Effectiveness: is a criteria to assess friendly actions that is tied to measuring task accomplishment (*JP 1-02*). Did we achieve the results?

[25] During his research, the author discovered that it was not a complete coincidence that the major COIN theorists in which FM 3-24 was based had common experiences on which to base their theories. In fact, David Galula, Frank Kitson, Wendell Fertig, Edward Lansdale, and Rufus Phillips attended and participated in a COIN Symposium April 16-20, 1962 in which they discussed issues of insurgency (Stephen T. Hosmer and Sibylle O. Crane, *Counterinsurgency A Symposium, April 16-20, 1962,*(Rand Corporation, 1962). The interesting fact is that although FM 3-24 espouses to take into account various COIN experts theories, in reality there is limited diversification of ideas and experience. Rufus Phillips made the comment, "Although we came from such widely divergent backgrounds, it was if we had all been brought up together from youth." Rufus Phillips, *Meeting Lt. Col. David Galula-April 1962*, From www.smallwarsjournal.com (accessed October, 2009).

[26] The very threat of violence by insurgents can force a person (or entire villages if that person is a tribal leader) to comply with the insurgents objective and strategy. They can intimidate a person into supporting the insurgency even though the physical terrain is occupied by the counterinsurgent. Therefore the clear and hold concept is not possible in many instances.

Additionally, considering the fluid nature of the Afghanistan and Pakistan border, is this concept even possible?

Traditional COIN theory[27] on which FM 3-24 is based, mention the need for a cause for the insurgency to begin. However, neither Galula nor other COIN theorists mention religious causes in their works[28]. In the case of the Afghani insurgents, the causes are religious melded in with the desire to create a caliphate, and their grievance is that they were thrown from power when they were in the process of developing the base for a caliphate.[29] These important factors play a substantial role in the counterinsurgents ability to "get at" the root cause because that root cause may not be able to be negotiated away, or destroyed. In fact, those issues may always be there, and not to the degree acceptable by the government.

The problem in Afghanistan, given its tumultuous history, numerous tribal and ethnic divisions, geography, and religious flavors is much more complex than past theorists have been exposed to in their past experiences, even Algeria. The base insurgency (the Taliban) has a religious cause that may or may not be able to be negotiated peacefully. The Taliban insurgents have the ability to move in and out of their bases largely unhindered (along the Afghan-Pakistan border), and they are linked to the populace with which they are interacting by culture and history that promotes loyalty. How does a counterinsurgent dissect this environment, and look for opportunities that will win the populace over to its side? The answer lies not only in properly framing the environment, but also understanding the political end state in

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[27] Based on David Galula (French Army), Julian Paget ( British Army), Frank Kitson (British Army), Sir Robert Thompson (British Army). David Kilcullen in his article, *"Countering Global Insurgency"*, November 30, 2004, pg. 2, "But classical counterinsurgency is designed to defeat insurgency in one country. Hence, traditional counterinsurgency theory has limitations in this context." http://smallwarsjournal.com/documents/kilcullen.pdf (assessed July,2009).

[28] Stephen T. Hosmer and Sibylle O. Crane, The Rand Corporation, *"Counterinsurgency A Symposium, April 16-20, 1962"*. A counterinsurgency symposium was conducted by Rand Corporation on April 16-20, 1962, and was attended by the major COIN theorists of that time: David Galula, Frank Kitson, Rufus Phillips, Napoleon Valeriano, and others. After reading the transcripts, the author noted that "none" of these theorists mentioned religion in their discussion of insurgency or counterinsurgency.

[29] Ayman al-Zawahiri, "Knights under the Prophet's Banner," *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, December 2, 2001.

which the counterinsurgent is operating. If the methods of operations do not provide the end state, then

the plan must be adjusted accordingly.

Although there are many shortcomings in classical COIN theory, and thus FM 3-24, these works

do have some valid observations that should not be lost. For example, it is safe to posit that there are

prerequisites for an insurgency that must be examined at in order for that counterinsurgency to have a

chance for success. Firstly, an insurgency must have a cause to move that insurgency forward.[30]

Secondly, the current authority is, or is perceived to be, weak.[31] Thirdly, local populace support is

critical[32]. Fourthly, external support can be decisive for an insurgency that does not have the capability to

generate its own support[33]. Finally, the information environment is always in play, and can force a

government from power, or thrust an insurgency into a position of advantage.[34]

Being aware of the above prerequisites must be balanced with and included in a very good

environmental frame[35]. In fact, Galula mentions the importance of knowing the environment, but short

changes that aspect by stating that the first step in countering the insurgency is, "Destruction or Expulsion

of the insurgent forces."[36] On the other hand, FM 3-24 discusses the importance of knowing the

operational environment,[37] and thus designing a campaign plan that takes into account the environment.

The best aspect of FM 3-24 is its recommendation to continually learn and adapt.[38] This is a seemingly

simple task, but when counterinsurgents are focused on the wrong problem, and think they are solving the

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[30] Cause: Galula, 8, 11; FM 3-24, 1-8, 1-10; Paget, 23.

[31] Weak Government: Galula, 17; FM 3-24, 1-7, 1-12.

[32] Populace Support: Galula, pg. 4; FM 3-24, 1-32, 5-21, etc.; Paget, 24; O'Neil, Chapter 5.

[33] External Support: Galula, pg. 26; FM 3-24, 1-4, 1-9, 1-11. Paget, 25.

[34] Information: Galula, 80(propaganda); FM 3-24, 1-1, 1-2, Appendix B; Paget does not mention information as a basic requirement.

[35] FMI 5-2, *Design,* 25. The environmental frame provides understanding about why the desired system differs from the observed system. The problem frame visualizes the tensions between the desired system and the observed system, showing what needs to change. The design concept organizes the pattern of parallel and sequential actions, showing how to solve or manage the problem.

[36] Galula, pg. 75.

[37] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-22, 4-5.

[38] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 1-21, 5-29.

right problem, reframing the approach becomes very problematic. The insurgent is constantly adapting, and those adaptations may not be learned until it is directly affecting operations of the counterinsurgent. Being proactive is the most important aspect of counterinsurgency.

In the final analysis, lessons learned from classical COIN theory should not be forgotten, nor should the classical principles of war that are so enduring- We should not throw out the baby with the bath water. Also, we should not rely on theory that was developed decades ago, which assumes the enemy has not changed or adapted to those original COIN tactics that worked at one time and is a product of the modern environment, but is considerably different than that faced by the classic COIN theorists. The causes have changed, the technology has changed, and the populace is much more in tune to what is going on due to the growth in information availability. Therefore, the U.S. must develop 21st century theory and tactics that put the enemy insurgent back on the defensive, while going on the offensive to make this world a safer place for all.[39]

The lesson learned from the research of classical COIN theory is that the U.S. must not disregard the principals of war just because it is involved in a different type of conflict. The U.S. must look back on theories that were developed, discourse the true meaning of those concepts, and determine if they still apply to the fight today. If not, then alternative concepts for obtaining political objectives need to be developed.

The next chapter discusses the Fire Model of insurgency, and applies the lessons learned from the classical works and current doctrine such as the elements of cause, weak government, populace support, external support, information, and then highlights a key component of an insurgents targeting strategy- exploiting a vulnerable populace. The goal is to meld the relevant aspects of classic theory and current

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[39] Alexander Alderson, *"US COIN Doctrine and Practice: An Ally's Perspective*," Parameters (Winter 2007-08): 42. "There are arguments for and against the classic counterinsurgency principals, whether they are Galula's, Thompson's, Kitson's, or variations on these doctrinal themes. How to reinterpret these principals is the doctrine writer's dilemma. Whether one supports the radical revisionist school or the more conventional approach of enduring truths, the landscape has changed markedly."

doctrine with 21st century experiences in order to win on the COIN battlefield of today, specifically in

Afghanistan.

# CHAPTER 3: THE FIRE MODEL OF INSURGENCY

*"Progress is relative to an ideal which reflection creates."*

- George Santayana[40]

A new 21st century approach to COIN is necessary if the counterinsurgent is to be successful in this complex world. This chapter first describes insurgency as it compares to the elements of fire, Secondly, it explains a new model for combating insurgency specifically the Fire Model of Counterinsurgency.

### Comparing Fire to Insurgency

| ELEMENT: | FUEL | HEAT | OXYGEN | CHAIN REACTION | RESULT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fire | Wood | Match | Air | Sustains the fire | Fire |
| Insurgency | Unresponsive Government | Diplomatic (internal/external | Vulnerability | Information Sustains insurgency | Insurgency |

FIGURE 1[41]

The Fire Model of Counterinsurgency compares an insurgency to fire. With both a fire and an insurgency, if allowed to continue without intervention, it will destroy whatever it is consuming. For example, an insurgency will consume a government, just as a fire will consume a forest. If unchecked and allowed to burn uncontrolled, it will eventually destroy everything in its path. However, if controlled or allowed to burn at a rate acceptable to whoever has a stake in it (e.g., firefighters operate "controlled burns" in order to direct fires to a more acceptable conclusion), then eventually the fire, or insurgency, will run its course and not be as destructive to the long-term health of the element it is consuming. However, unlike a fire, an insurgency is rarely a cleansing agent.

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[40] George Santayana, " *The Life of Reason: or the Phases of Human Progress"* (London: London Constable, 1906), 1.

[41] Developed by author. Compares the elements necessary for fire to that of an insurgency (fuel, heat, oxygen, chain reaction).

In its early stages, an insurgency initiated within a state is like a smoldering fire. If not immediately addressed, it will spread like a wild fire. When comparing the elements necessary for fire to start, spread, and maintain, it closely compares to that of an insurgency. The theory is that the four elements necessary for a fire (fuel, oxygen, heat, and chain reaction) parallel the necessary elements of an insurgency and, like a fire, only one of those elements needs to be removed, to make that insurgency unsustainable.

Each insurgency, like every fire, begins in different ways, and in time, its basic characteristics can change that would require the response to change.[42] There are some basic principles that keep it going, and ultimately allow it to grow. Every leader and planner must thoroughly frame the operational environmental[43] in order to understand the root causes, (the basic elements that have started and are sustaining the insurgency), and understand how the populace and information, both formal and informal, can cause a chain reaction throughout the area of operations, and hinder counterinsurgency efforts to quell it. Although insurgencies appear more complicated than the basic elements of fire, there are lessons to be learned by understanding the environment, and the various narratives that define the root causes of an insurgency.

Like a fire, an insurgency will occur when the elements necessary for it are combined in the right mixture. For example, without sufficient heat, a fire cannot begin, and it cannot continue. Similarly, if an insurgency does not have sufficient political or diplomatic heat, an insurgency cannot be sustained. Without fuel a fire will go out. In an insurgency, if counterinsurgent removes what is fueling it

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[42] An example of beginning in different ways: The war in Algeria and Boer War were wars of colonial anti-separatist, the Russian Revolution and Cuban Revolution was a war of domestic regime change/Revolution, and Iraq and Afghanistan are wars of international regime change. An example of a changing in characteristics: In Afghanistan the insurgency at first was a direct engagement between disposed elements and counterinsurgent forces. The insurgency then changed tactics and developed a more indirect approach- working through the village leaders. Recently, the insurgents have become bolder, and have actually taken over villages.

[43] FMI 5-2, *Design*, 19-20: Understanding the operational environment in design requires conceptualizing the environment as a system. This representation is called an environmental frame (see figure 3-2 on page 20).

(unresponsive government), the insurgency will not be able to be sustained.[44] Without sufficient oxygen a fire cannot begin and cannot continue. Nevertheless, as in a fire, in most cases, there is plenty of oxygen (structures and vulnerabilities) even when the fire goes out, so this is the most difficult element to combat or eliminate. The final element, combustion, or chain reaction (Information) is the chemical reaction that feeds on the fire, or the insurgency, and allows it to continue. If you add water (a typical fire suppression agent) it may actually result in the fire getting hotter, or even exploding (if the fuel is metal, not wood). In chemistry, this is called exothermic reaction.[45] In COIN, if the counterinsurgent does not know the cause of the insurgency, or adds the incorrect element to quell it, to expose this lack of information, the same conditions will be set. In fact, the insurgency may even get hotter. Therefore, sometimes-inert agents (e.g., dry sand) must be used to break the chain reaction of metallic combustion. A counterinsurgent must use a proper information operations (inert information) campaign that breaks the chain reaction of the insurgency. How information is used in both directions (going out and coming in), or if it is not used, has significant impact on COIN operations.

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[44] John E. Pascall,Jr. interview, May, 2008: This information was obtained from the authors father John Pascall, Jr. who was a firefighter and investigator for the Buffalo, New York Fire Department for thirty years. His experience and knowledge led the author to this comparison after numerous discussions regarding the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. A lower concentration of fuel vapor in the flame leads to decrease in energy release and a lower temperature. Therefore, acceptable (lower) levels of poor governance will not necessarily be enough for an insurgency to expand.

[45] John E. Pascall, Jr. interview May, 2008: An exothermic reaction is a chemical reaction that is accompanied by the release of heat. The energy needed for the reaction to occur is less than the total energy released. As a result of this, the extra energy is released, usually in the form of heat. Information in an insurgency can, and usually does release extra energy that results in added heat.

**THE FIRE MODEL OF INSURGENCY**
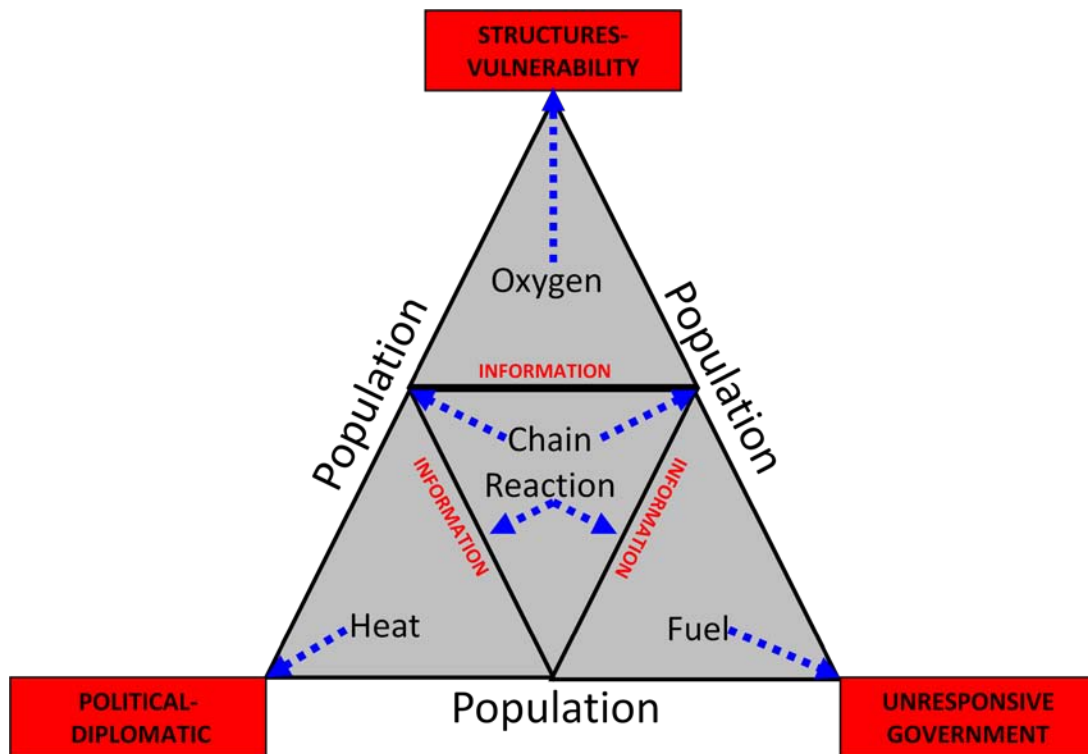


FIGURE 2: THE FIRE MODEL OF COUNTERINSURGENCY[46]

The Fire Model of Insurgency can be graphically depicted as a tetrahedron. The key prerequisites for a successful insurgency form the three sides of the tetrahedron. Side one is political-diplomatic (internal and external support). Side two is unresponsive government (to include weakness in authority). Although weakness in an authority, in and of itself, may not cause an insurgency, the perception of the populace in the unresponsiveness of that authority will. Side three is structures and vulnerability, which includes geographic conditions along with other related aspects, such as being displaced (refugee). For

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[46] John E. Pascall, Jr. interview May, 2009: The fire triangle or combustion triangle is a simple model, from the practitioners of firefighting, for understanding the ingredients necessary for most fires. It has been replaced in the industry by the fire tetrahedron, which adds further aspects. The triangle illustrates the rule that in order to ignite and burn, a fire requires three elements. The Fire Model of Insurgency, as developed by the author, is similar to the fire tetrahedron in that an insurgency requires certain elements in order to ignite and burn.

example, in an excerpt from Seth D. Kaplan's book *Fixing Fragile States*, in the chapter "Fostering Development: The Missing Ingredients," he states, "…this toxic combination – the absence of social cohesion and the lack of a set of shared, productive institutions– prevents states from fashioning a robust nationwide governing system, yielding instead a host of chronic problems."[47] The cause they are fighting for will fall into one of the other elements because the cause is usually derived from one of the other's prerequisites. Even if it is a religious cause, it may fall into vulnerability, or unresponsive governance depending on how that issue is played by the insurgent in the information domain.

In developing the Fire Model of Counterinsurgency, the assumption is that the 21st century insurgent has equal access to information, and therefore has equal access to the population through many mediums (word of mouth, radio, TV, internet, and the like). This model of counterinsurgency considers the populace connecting all the elements, in that without the populace support, neither the counterinsurgents nor the insurgent can win. The information aspect is the base, and can sustain popular support if used properly. For the insurgent, the information does not have to be true, just believable by the populace. For the counterinsurgent, he must be truthful. That is one of the insurgent advantages.

The main idea of the Fire Model of Counterinsurgency is that one needs to address only one of the core elements of the Fire Model of Counterinsurgency in order to affect the connector elements (information and population).[48] However, the connector elements are equally important to the COIN operator as those core elements, because poorly managed information and poor interaction with the populace can adversely affect the environment being operating in.

The elements of the Fire Model of Counterinsurgency were developed based on both historical accounts, research of current theory and practice, and personal experience gained during my thirteen years

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[47] Seth D. Kaplan, "Fostering Development: The Missing Ingredients" in *Fixing Fragile States*, School of Advanced Military Studies (REPRINT), (Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2008), pg. 12.

[48] Peter R. Mansoor, *"Linking Doctrine to Action: A New COIN Center-of-Gravity Analysis,"* Military Review (September-October 2007), pg. 48. COL Mansoor states, "As aforementioned, the enemy COIN COG is that aspect of the population that the enemy exploits to achieve his operational goals." In other words, each insurgency's cause and COIN response is dependent on the environment being exploited by the insurgency.

as a civil affairs officer working in Haiti, Honduras, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Horn of Africa. I have

melded all these sources to describe core areas that counterinsurgents must pay critical attention to, then

based on their environmental frame, determine the key area to focus on to put out the particular

fire/insurgency they are fighting.

## CORE ELEMENT 1: Fuel (Unresponsive Government)[49]

The first element necessary for an insurgency is fuel, and numerous things can fuel an

insurgency. Like a fire, the fuel that drives an insurgency is not enough on its own to cause an insurgency

to start or grow in intensity. However, the initiations of insurgencies are typically attributed to failure of

government.[50] Other elements or conditions that encourage that fuel to ignite are also necessary. Some

examples of conditions that can act as fuel to an insurgency:

Poor Services:[51] If the government fails to provide the basic services that people require to

maintain a basic economic level, such as sewer, water, electric, and education, the populace will look for

alternatives to the government[52]. If the public believes there is an alternative, the legitimacy of the

government is in doubt[53]. However, one must be careful when comparing the definition of services. For

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[49] Bard E. O'Neill, *From Revolution to Apocalypse Insurgency and Terrorism,* 2nd ed. revised (Virginia: Potomac Books, 2005), 155. O'Neill dedicated an entire chapter to government response stating on page. 155, "Of all the variables that have bearing on the progress and outcome of insurgencies, none is more important than government response." FM 3-24, *Design*, indirectly discusses this, but seems to highlight legitimacy of a government over unresponsiveness of that same government.

[50] Frank H. Zimmerman, *"Why Insurgencies Fail: Examining Post-World War II Failed Insurgencies Utilizing the Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies as a Framework,"* (Monterey, CA: Naval Post Graduate School, March 2007), pg. 125. Zimmerman makes the case that most grievances are tied to issues that a government can address. Greek Civil War: "Leaders could not identify an existing domestic issue." Malayan Emergency: "The Malayan and British government effectively addressed the grievances of the Chinese minority." The Huk Movement: "The issues of land reform and government corruption appealed to the populace", and "Both of these causes were greatly weakened by aggressive economic, political, social and military reforms be the Philippine government."

[51] O'Neill mentions the impact of "shadow governments" that will provide social services absent government doing so, pg. 106. FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, pages 1-7, 3-8, 3-10, also mention the importance of services.

[52] FM 3-24,*Counterinsurgency*, 1-7, "As the populace loses faith in the established authority the people may decide to actively resist it…a counter state may begin to emerge to fill gaps in governance…"

[53] George Packer, *"Kilcullen on Afghanistan: "It's Still Winnable, But Only Just."* The New Yorker, (November 14, 2008), pg. 2. http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/georgepacker/2008/11/kilcullen-on-af.html

example, in the Horn of Africa, and certain areas of Afghanistan, people have no interest in trash pickup or sewer services. In these locations, the other aspects of unresponsive government would have a bigger impact on the populace, such as security and education. In short, operational environments vary.

Lack of Security:[54] In every environment, whether in the United States or the Horn of Africa, people want to feel secure. Security is typically the most important service a government can provide because without security, it cannot provide any other services. Insurgents feed on a lack of security and lawlessness, and will always try to circumvent the rule of law. Essentially, when the local police, the face of government, are unable to provide security, then the legitimacy and credibility of the government are in jeopardy. This becomes a slippery slope and training security forces on short notice without the proper infrastructure is very challenging.

Non-representative government: Unless one has a very strong security apparatus to control the populace, a government that fails to represent its population will be challenged by elements of that population. For example, for many years Saddam Hussein, a Sunni, ran a government that administered services to a majority Shia population. The only factor that kept him in power, and ultimately suppressed any kind of insurgency, was his highly effective security service that used force and the threat of force to keep the Shia disorganized and unable to mount any kind of challenge to his power.[55] Strong suppression of personal freedom can be the oxygen of an insurgency; however, if the other elements (fuel and heat) are not present, it will never start because people are content with the services provided, or the populace has not been encouraged by an internal or external component.

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(accessed April 14, 2009). The author states, "The classical counterinsurgency theorist Bernard Fall wrote, in 1965, that a government which is losing to an insurgency isn't being out-fought, it's being out-governed."

[54] The need for security before, during and after insurgency seems to be the common theme in both historical cases, and current insurgencies. This is demonstrated with the clear, hold strategy both Galula and therefore FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, promote in the "after-fact" strategy of combating insurgency.

[55] Galula, 19, also refers to this, "As long as there is no privacy, as long as every unusual move or event is reported and checked, as long as parents are afraid to talk in front of their children, how can contacts be made, ideas spread, recruiting accomplished?" Later when they were liberated, both pro-Saddam and Anti-Saddam elements were unleashed and free to initiate operations to take power. It also created instability, an opportunity for insurgency.

## CORE ELEMENT 2: Heat (Political-Diplomatic Factors)[56]

The second element required for an insurgency is internal or external political heat. Like a fire, heat in an insurgency will be produced once an insurgency has started. Therefore, a separate heat introduction is not necessary (that separate element, information (chain reaction), is addressed later in this monograph). In an insurgency, heat is introduced in two ways: internal heat and external heat.

Internal Heat:[57] When the government fails to provide basic services that the populace expects or is used to, it creates friction (heat).[58] Additionally, with limited services provided, people will look for alternative ways to obtain essential services that government fails to provide. When this happens, the local tribal, ethnic or religious leaders are inclined to respond due to their traditional role of caretaker of their clan. This presents a threefold problem. First, it empowers those individuals "outside" the government because they provide those missing elements, therefore undermining the legitimacy of that government. Second, it forces neighborhoods to corral their own resources within their own geographical area (e.g., farms or oil-rich areas). This sets the conditions for tribal and/or ethnic division over the control of resources. Third, in societies that have a strong religious history, it will encourage, or force, these religious leaders to respond in a more dramatic manner because in some societies a separate government from the religious structure is not acceptable.[59] If outside leaders provide even slightly more than the government provides, their power and influence grows. Soon the government is marginalized.

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[56] O'Neill *From Revolution to Apocalypse Insurgency and Terrorism,* 2nd ed. revised (Virginia: Potomac Books, 2005),discusses these aspects on page 83-87.

[57] Ibid, 28, Warlords, tribal or clan basis with, "Their main aim appears to be nothing more than the acquisition of material resources through seizure and control of political power." O'Neill, 98-99, "Charismatic Attraction". FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency, pg. 1-7, 3-9. Galula, pg. 14.

[58] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War,* Abridged (New York: Penguin Classics, November 18, 1982), pg. 81. "The same political object can elicit differing reactions from different peoples, and even from the same people at different times…Between two peoples and two states there can be such tensions, such as mass of inflammable material, that the slightest quarrel can produce a wholly disproportionate effect-a real explosion."

[59] For instance, the Taliban seeks to meld government into their religious structure (Shiria Law).

External Heat:[60] In instances of instability within a state, there are many external factors, direct or indirect, that can promote and perpetuate an insurgency and its goal of delegitimizing and destabilizing a government. In considering direct factors, a foreign nation has many options available to support an insurgency that, on the surface, may seem to support democracy and other goodwill. For example, Movses Abelian, the United Nations Ambassador to Armenia, described the problem in his country in which outside actors have skillfully cloaked UN humanitarian aid in a way that empowers Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs),[61] or those organizations that are actually associated with insurgent groups outside that nation's government.[62] When food aid arrives, these organizations sympathetic to the insurgency will offer to distribute this humanitarian assistance (HA), for the struggling government and ultimately fill a gap that the government sees only as a distraction (serving internally displaced persons (IDPs), refugees and the like). The insurgencies now have a base from which to recruit within a populace that is vulnerable.

In many instances there is direct funding and open support of insurgent organizations. An example is Iran's support of extremist Shia factions in Iraq. Iran has sent fighters, trainers and money to solidify its influence there. Some examples of indirect influence include what many police agencies in the

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[60] O'Neill, *From Revolution to Apocalypse Insurgency and Terrorism,* 2nd ed. revised (Virginia: Potomac Books, 2005),Chapter 7 is entirely dedicated to external support. Also, on page. 139 he states, "Unless governments (host nation) are utterly incompetent, devoid of political will, and lacking in resources, insurgent organizations must normally obtain outside assistance if they are to succeed." *FM 3-24*, on page 1-13, lists external support as one of the key dynamics of an insurgency. Galula, on page 22, mentions the importance of external factors, and on page 26, he states, "No outside support is absolutely necessary at the start of the insurgency, although it obviously helps when available.", and "When the time comes, however, for the insurgent to pass from guerrilla to a higher form of operations, to create a regular army, and need for (external support) much larger and more varied supplies becomes acute."

[61] George K. Tanham and Dennis J Duncanson, *"Some Dilemmas of Counterinsurgency",* Foreign Affairs (October 1969): pg. 2*,* http://www.foreignaffairs.carticles/24114/george-k-tanham-and-dennis-j-duncanson/some-dilemmas-of-counterinsurgencyom (accessed June 19, 2009). In referring to the communist supported insurgents in Vietnam the author's state, "Because of the very nature of fronts and the lack of accurate intelligence, it is often difficult to tell which (NGO) are true voluntary organizations of the people and which have been cleverly subverted or created by the communists for their own ends. This still holds true today.

[62] Movses Abelian, "General Assembly Hears 34 Speakers in Continued Debate on Global Terrorism; Difference Between Terrorism, Legitimate Resistance Among Issues Raised." *United Nations Press Release GA/9927* (New York: United Nations, 2001), 1. Abelian, Ambassador to the United Nations, states, "General Assembly Hears 34 Speakers in Continued Debate on Global Terrorism; Difference Between Terrorism., Legitimate Resistance Among Issues Raised"

United States call "passive observers." When people simply watch a crime being committed and do nothing to stop it, it is known as passive support for crime. These passive supporters, called "fence sitters" in COIN vernacular, actually encourage these individuals and groups to commit more anti-government activities by their inaction. As in any crime prevention and crime fighting strategy, one must set conditions for fence sitters to come forward.[63] Additionally, one must get to the root cause of why they choose not to come forward. Often, it is because they worry about their own safety, do not know who to report to, or distrust the agency that is supposed to help them. The bottom line is that there are legitimate reasons to not trust governmental structures. Limited police training and a lack of connectivity with the populace are often primary causes.

Within this element , there are many factors that can turn up the heat on the government and therefore create a temperature that brings the other elements up to the ignition point. The counterinsurgency strategists must understand that unless both aspects of the heat element are addressed simultaneously, both internal and external, in a holistic way, or if they are unable to at least turn down the heat, the other elements will soon ignite, and be destroyed by the back draft.[64]

## CORE ELEMENT 3: Oxygen (Structures or Vulnerability)[65]

The third element necessary for an insurgency is oxygen, or the structures and vulnerabilities within the area the insurgent or counterinsurgent is operating. The presence of oxygen in the atmosphere, even in low amounts, is necessary to start and perpetuate a fire. In an insurgency, like a fire, oxygen is the

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[63] Fence-sitters: One who takes a position of neutrality or indecision in a controversial matter. FM 3-24, page 4-7 describes a situation during OIF II where fence-sitters were considered.

[64] John E. Pascall, Jr. interview May, 2008: Back draft: a situation which can occur when a fire is starved of oxygen; consequently combustion ceases but the fuel gases and smoke remain at high temperature. If oxygen is re-introduced to the fire, eg. by opening a door to a closed room, combustion can restart often resulting in an explosive effect as the gases heat and expand.

[65] O'Neill, *From Revolution to Apocalypse Insurgency and Terrorism,* 2nd ed. revised (Virginia: Potomac Books, 2005),78, "To better understand insurgencies, we need to go beyond the basic demographic attributes of a population and inquire about the impact of its social structure." *FM 3-24* on page 3-18 states, "Traumatized and dislocated persons may become vulnerable to insurgent threats and recruitment." Galula states on page 24 that, "An underdeveloped country is less vulnerable to terrorism but much more open to guerrilla warfare, if only because the counterinsurgent cannot count on a good network of transport and communication facilities and because the population is more autarchic(has more individual liberty, and rejects compulsory government)."

most difficult part of the formula to remove because of the ever presence and existence of that component within a society. Several conditions can promote increased existence of oxygen in an insurgency, including vulnerability due to the core beliefs of that society, lack of national unity, and varied national goals. The structures of non-representative government (as in Afghanistan where the provincial and local district government leaders are appointed by the central government) is another key element- like oxygen, these elements must be present, but they may be present in varying amounts. Commanders must know the environment and be aware of these potential oxidizing elements. For example, a refugee camp, can facilitate or oxidize the insurgency in that this vulnerable populace are already disillusioned by government, and typically fall prey to insurgent recruiters that offer a better life.

Core Beliefs:[66] The core beliefs of a population can create the conditions for an insurgency. Religious beliefs are one of these core beliefs. When looking around the globe, one sees many different belief systems. In democratic countries, the emphasis is on the individual. One can contrast that with predominately-Muslim countries where the rights of the individual are subjugated to the religious leaders. The later belief system can work against a government that wants to promote economic growth, because the individuals left behind in economic prosperity are instigated into fighting back in the name of Allah.

Cultural beliefs are another of the core beliefs:[67] When looking at the culture of an area, one must look at the history, norms and acceptable behavior. Over time, some cultural factors will encourage action by a group against a higher authority. Tribal differences or ethnic divisions, for example, may cause the group out of power, or the minority group, to find ways to confront the majority power and address the injustice or perceived injustice; such means do not always translate into action at the ballot box. Finally, add to that a culture with no history of democratic values being forced to accept those values. What the

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[66] Ibid, 23, "Apocalyptic-Utopian type of insurgencies. He states, "A fringe insurgent grouping that merits brief attention includes religious cults with political aims, some of which transcend the confines of the state." Is the Taliban more of a cult? Most would group them under O'Neills other type of insurgent The Traditionalist, on page 21, "…insurgents who articulate primordial and sacred values rooted in ancestral ties and religion (and) have posed the greatest threat in the early twenty-first century."

[67] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 6-2, "Positions of power can lead to corruption, which can also be affected by local culture."

counterinsurgent is confronted with can be a clash of cultures, and the enduring values of that area will usually have at least an edge in the confrontation.

Lack of National Unity: The influence of national unity should never be overrated.[68] For many years, dictators have used this factor to suppress dissatisfaction within a society and ultimately keep insurgents off balance. When there is a state that is fractioned from within, the conditions are set for people to search for a common enemy. This is the reason why many dictators have been successful; they have found a common enemy to distract the population (e.g.,Saddam versus Iran, or Chavez versus the United States).

Poor Economic Conditions:[69] This aspect of unresponsive governance is again situation dependent. What a counterinsurgent considers poor economic conditions in Iraq may not apply to many other areas of the globe. However, if people have no work and cannot feed their family, they will blame the people in charge and will look for alternative ways to support their families, such as crime, insurgency, or membership in alternative organizations such as Al Qaeda. The bottom line is that people desire self-respect, which usually comes through the ability to provide for themselves or their family.[70]

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[68] John McCreary, "AFCEA International," *Nightwatch,*pg.3, http://nightwatch.afcea.org/NightWatch_20090807.htm (accessed August 7, 2009). Nightwatch states the problem with building national unity in Afghanistan. Building national unity in Afghanistan is more difficult than is will be in Iraq. On page 3 they state, "…how does a "hearts and minds" strategy work with the Durani Pashtuns vs the Ghilzai Pashtunes vs the Takiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, gypsies, and Nuristanis plus the hundreds of clans. They pride themselves on being the world's greatest tribal society…extolling difference not similarity."

[69] O'Neill, *From Revolution to Apocalypse Insurgency and Terrorism,* 2nd ed. revised (Virginia: Potomac Books, 2005),81, "As even a cursory look at insurrections makes clear, in most cases, economic factors of one sort or another do in fact play a key part in the outbreak and endurance of political violence." *FM 3-24,* on page 3-10, and throughout the manual clearly states the criticality of economics. Galula, on page 14, states that the problem may be economic.

[70] This aspect will also fall into the "vulnerability" aspect of the Fire Model of Insurgency, but the motivation and opportunity for the insurgent to exploit, and populace to be targeted is different.

## CONNECTOR ELEMENTS: Chain Reaction (Information and the Population)[71]

Once a fire starts, there is no longer a need for the introduction of additional heat as the fire now becomes self-sustaining by an uninhibited chemical reaction, known in insurgencies as information and the population. These two elements can become the unstoppable domino effect that can only be addressed by eliminating the fuel or oxygen.

Information:[72] Like a fire that can now be seemingly unstoppable once ignited, the information war can also take on a life of its own and be almost unstoppable unless the fuel or oxygen is removed. The information does not necessarily need to be accurate; it only needs to be plausible to the audience. Most importantly, in an insurgency, the enemy elements play on the population fence sitters. The problem is, the fence sitters usually make up a majority of the population, as they are not actively engaged on either side of the issue at hand. The information domain is very important, yet very difficult to control especially in an environment as fluid as COIN. The Fire Model (see Figure 2) shows that all of the necessary elements for fire are linked by information, surrounded by the population, can be seemingly self-sustaining, and will influence the environment if not properly controlled and utilized. The commanders must have the necessary tools at hand to convey the proper message, at the proper time, with the proper medium. Otherwise, all the right things being done by the right people at the right time will be worthless. Counterinsurgents must be able to communicate to the populace what they are doing and why, and all their actions must be linked to the overall goal of winning over the population. Commanders at the lowest level must not only understand this, but must have the assets, such as Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations officers, to implement their information campaign.

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[71] Information is mentioned in most of the research from external, in O'Neill, page184-185, to internal, Galula, page 80, information. FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-8, considers information operations critical, "The IO LLO (logical line of operation) may often be the decisive LLO." In fact, in a research analysis *"Guidelines for Measuring Success in Counterinsurgency"* from 1966, pg. 5 states, "In many cases, good propaganda has offset poor operations."

[72] David Kilcullen, *"Counter-insurgency Redux,"* Survival 48, no. 4 (Winter 2006-2007)pg. 113. Kilcullen states, "One of the most significant globalization effects is the rise of worldwide audience, giving insurgents near-instantaneous means to publicize their cause." Most importantly it states, "Classical counter-insurgency theory has little to say about electronic sanctuary."

Population:[73] Due to the fact that the populace runs along all the faces of the tetrahedron, it is obvious how critical the population is to any insurgency or counterinsurgency. The population is the glue that holds all the faces together. How one informs or influences the populace will depend on how that population traditionally communicates. Whether through traditional methods such as the media, the tribe, or the Imam, coordination of the themes and messages is critical. The commanders must know their information environment, and use the best tool to communicate that message to the populace to either gain or maintain support.

The Fire Model of insurgency concept is not to be confused with the Center of Gravity (COG)[74] analysis that orients on "one" particular entity as the ultimate moral or physical source of power.[75] Rather, it is a new way of thinking that relies on a good environmental frame that focuses efforts of the counterinsurgent into that "area" of the insurgency that is vulnerable to defeat that will ultimately make that insurgency unsustainable.

The Fire Model of insurgency concept discourages the idea of dispersing efforts, as current thinking advocates. It not only violates four of the basic principles of war, specifically economy of force,[76] simplicity,[77] Objective,[78] and Mass,[79] but also forces the expenditure of organizational energies

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[73] The major theme among most of the readings was that winning support among the populace is the most critical aspect of COIN. However, it seems that in some societies, such as Iraq and more so Afghanistan, populace support may be determined by tribal leaders support. While in Iraq and Afghanistan the author witnessed entire villages turn their support on a dime when the tribal leader or key leader announced that they should.

[74] JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 81.

[75] Kem, Chapter 3.

[76] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-13. Allocate minimum essential combat power to secondary efforts.

[77] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-15. Prepare clear, uncomplicated plans and concise orders to ensure thorough understanding. Everything in war is very simple, but the simple thing is difficult. To the uninitiated, military operations are not difficult. Simplicity contributes to successful operations. Simple plans and clear, concise orders minimize misunderstanding and confusion. Other factors being equal, parsimony is to be preferred.

[78] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-12. Direct every military operation toward a clearly defined, decisive, and attainable objective.

[79] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-13. Concentrate the effects of combat power at the decisive place and time.

that would otherwise focus on the real problem at hand.[80] No doubt, this is especially critical today considering the current constraints on military and financial resources.

The reason the United States was initially successful in Iraq was that the Shia were the predominant group that saw the United States as liberators. However, because of the loss of Sunni power and resistance, and the U.S.'s failure to secure the border from outsiders, the U.S. lost the momentum for success. The friction this caused ignited the element of "unresponsive governance" because the U.S. did not fill the hole left by the disposed government that faded away. The conditions were being set for an insurgency. In Iraq, the three elements of the "Fire Model of Insurgency" were now in place (heat from the friction between Sunni and Shia, oxygen from the forced national unity that was dismantled, and fuel from the government and all its services that were no longer available).

In Iraq, the U.S. was faced with the reality that COIN operations in a foreign nation have a shelf life in domestic politics. Therefore, the key was to quickly build host nation capacity (eliminate the fuel), build national unity (deprive it of oxygen), or negotiate differences that caused friction between the Sunni and Shia (lower the heat). If not, the insurgent elements would use the counterinsurgent presence as a unifying force to perpetuate violence. The U.S. started to build HN capacity, when it should have realized that the root cause of the insurgency was the internal heat it actually caused by displacing the current regime. If it understood the environment better, the U.S. would have reframed, and implemented the diplomatic aspect of COIN that would have made that insurgency unsustainable.

Insurgencies in the 20th century have been found to have five common characteristics: grievance (a cause to fight for), power (weakness in the authority), influence (internal or external support, information capability), vulnerability (susceptibility to misinformation or political influence), and surrounding all those root causes are the population, in which insurgents and counterinsurgents are

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[80] Josiah A. Wallace, *"Principals of War and Counterinsurgency,"* , Military Review (1966), 81. LTC Wallace does a great job of explaining the enduring importance of the principals of war in a counterinsurgency. On page 81, he states, "The Principals of War are an excellent device for the commander to use in analyzing all aspects of his counterinsurgency plans. If his plans conform to the principals of war, he is on firm ground."

attempting to gain support (local populace support).[81] The 21st century has changed the face of insurgency known by Galula and Kitson due to the increased availability and use of information and communication tools that are now equally accessible by all. Therefore, the potential for insurgency being a growth industry over the next several decades is very realistic. That is why counterinsurgents must be prepared for every type of environment, know that environment, understand the root causes, and integrate information operations in every aspect, and at every level, of their operations.

Enduring aspects in COIN that do not change are the ability to gain information about the environment one is operating in, the ability to find the root cause of a problem, and the insight to adjust a plan along the way as conditions change. That is why the counterinsurgent must be able to promote constant learning, the challenging of current ideas, and ingenuity and the relentless search for options. After all, "conducting a counterinsurgency strategy cannot be done in a business-as-usual manner."[82]

The Army of today must make sense of complicated environments. The concept of the "Fire Model of Counterinsurgency" along with the emerging concepts of design will give U.S. military planners the tools necessary to understand the environment, figure out what the real problem is, design a plan for intervention, and concentrate their efforts in the area that can have the most impact given the constraints and tensions identified. If the U.S. continues to ignore some of the basic Principals of War,[83] and continues to try to address every single problem within the counterinsurgency environment, it will find itself in the same situation that it was in from 2002 through 2007 in Afghanistan and Iraq. At that

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[81] Based not only on the author's research and experience, but on a comprehensive research study conducted by Frank H. Zimmerman, *"Why Insurgencies Fail: Examining Post-World War II Failed Insurgencies Utilizing the Prerequisites of Successful Insurgencies as a Framework."*, 23.

[82] Max G. Manwaring and Court Prisk, *"A Strategic View of Insurgencies: Insights From El Salvador"*, McNair Papers, number 8 (Washington, D.C.: The Institute for National Strategic Studies, May 1990), 4.

[83] FM 3-0, *Operations*, 4-11, "General guidance for conducting war and military operations other than war at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. The principals are the bedrock of Army doctrine." Alderson, 68, "In 1926 Major General J.F.C. Fuller stated…The central idea of an army…to be sound must be based on the principals of war, and to be effective must be elastic enough to admit to mutation in accordance with change in circumstances."

time, the U.S. did not understand the environment, did not identify the real problem, and never reframed[84] the original operational plan it designed. As it turned out, the most important thing the U.S. needed to do in Iraq was to understand the tensions that were developing between al-Qaeda and the populace, and develop a plan that exploited that cleavage.

The Fire Model of insurgency concept forwards the idea that a COIN force, if it properly understands the environment, and properly frames the problem, can concentrate its efforts on the one area that is sustaining the insurgency. However, considerations for the populace must always be addressed, and a thorough understanding of the information that is both going out and coming in, as that can adversely affect the probability for success.

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[84] FMI 5-2, *Design*, 26. A key to our ability to adapt to changes in the environment is recognizing changes as they occur. In Afghanistan and Iraq, the enemy transformed from a direct kinetic enemy to an insurgency. The commanders failed to identify this, either because they had not clearly understood the indicators, and/or because they did not have the training, updated doctrine, or the proper assets to deal with the change. The saying, "When all you have is a hammer everything looks like a nail," applies.

# CHAPTER 4: Theory Applied: Afghanistan

*"Sometimes the questions are complicated and the answers are simple."*

-Dr Seuss

This chapter is based on an environmental frame developed from an analysis of Afghanistan by Seminar 9 at the U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) from January to July 2009.[85] The Fire Model is applied to this environmental frame to determine the core element(s) on which the U.S. can focus its efforts to make the insurgency unsustainable.[86] The reader must keep in mind that insurgencies at their earliest stages lack strength and organization, and therefore are easier to quell than more advanced insurgencies. In the Afghan-Pakistan border area, the insurgency has had time to develop and has grown in complexity, and thus the environmental information necessary for solving that insurgency is more time consuming for COIN planners. In other words, the longer the insurgency has had time to grow roots, the more complex it becomes, and the time required for planning dramatically increases.

As a current operation, Afghanistan was a relevant case to analyze. My SAMS Seminar was assigned this area for study, which provided the basis of the environmental frame described in this chapter. Afghanistan is a great example of how the U.S. is faced with an insurgency in 2009 that is much different from the one that it faced in 2002. This morphing of the insurgency demonstrates the need for framing the environment properly, and then reframing as conditions appear to be changing-for good or bad. As stated in chapter 1, the goal of this study is to assist the counterinsurgent, and encourage critical thinking and discourse in the field of COIN in order to promote the learning organization concept, and

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[85] Students from SAMS Seminar 9 are listed in the bibliography. In accordance with CGSC Bulletin #20, Group Projects (Paragraph 3).

[86] Unlike the traditional COG (Kem, 19: Center of Gravity: Physical or moral entities that are the primary components of physical or moral strength, power, and resistance.). Rather, a less specific area for intervention such as governance vs. a specific leader within the government.

ensure that the U.S. does not fall into the same trap that it did after the Vietnam War, and later in the 1990s when it seemed that the U.S. had stopped learning.

During the first few years of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, most of the U.S. military efforts focused on the enemy. Although Civil Affairs (CA) received money for various Humanitarian Assistance (HA) and Humanitarian Civic Assistance (HCA) projects, it seemed that there was very little correlation between the projects being approved, and what was needed to create early stability.[87] In most areas of Afghanistan, the residents were just trying to pick up their lives and get back to their version of normal. The problem came when the U.S. decided that each province needed a Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT).[88] Instead of focusing on the real challenge, building legitimacy for the new government, the U.S. created new problems by building unrealistic expectations among the Afghans. For example, in Konduz the Afghans were told that new roads would be built, schools would be constructed in each district, and a new hospital would be funded. However, the PRT was not in a position to make those guarantees. Not understood at that time was that the developing Afghan national government was getting penetration in those local areas without the PRTs and that U.S. was investing millions of dollars in projects that most Afghans did not need, and did not care for. For example, the local police were getting organized, and the local Governor was attending all the important meetings with local tribal leaders. They were doing what was desired by the national government- penetrate influence down to the Provincial and District level. Afghans are very astute at knowing who has power and money, and what is required to receive those benefits. The U.S. spent unnecessary time and expense because it did not understand the culture or the true concerns of the Afghans in the areas outside of Kabul. The U.S. did not properly frame the environment.

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[87] While a member of a PRT, the author received no published guidance or plan at that time for the allocation of HA and HCA project funding.

[88] As defined by the author. Provincial Reconstruction Team: A unit introduced by the United States government, consisting of military officers, diplomats, and reconstruction subject matter experts, working to support reconstruction efforts in unstable states. PRTs were first established in Afghanistan in early 2002, and as of 2009 operate there as well as in Iraq. While the concepts are similar, PRTs in Afghanistan and Iraq have separate compositions and missions. Their common purpose, however, is to empower local governments to govern their constituents more effectively.

The insurgency in Afghanistan continues because the U.S. has yet to focus its efforts. In the current environment, after the insurgency and instability has had time to grow, the U.S. continues to believe that "whole of government" means that all elements of national power need to have a role. That is not the intent of that term. Whole of government means that when a problem arises, all the elements of national power needs to evaluate their resources to deal with the problem, and "if" an element can add value, then it must be included in the process. If not, it must step back. In other words, all elements of nation power should come to bear when appropriate.

## ENVIRONMENTAL FRAME AFGHANISTAN

Afghanistan represents a complex environment that intertwines aspects of the cultural, historical, geographical, political, and economic arenas. Culturally diverse, Afghanistan's constituent populations do not live in harmony as a true expression of nationhood. Tribal, regional, and longstanding grudges and debts impede development of national identity and a coherent national narrative. Afghanistan's geography has served as a battleground for several thousand years, involving both internal actors and foreign powers. Mountainous terrain and poor road networks have reinforced the lack of blending among the predominant cultures[89]. The unreachable areas of the nation have made post-war formal reconstruction efforts and equality in the distribution of services and resources very difficult. This lack of penetration by historically weak central governments continues to obstruct the current and future goals of an internally stable and self-governing nation. The majority of the population has received little formal education, maintaining a literacy rate near 28 percent.[90]

The Afghan environment is most simply understood as a power struggle between the government and the opposition (supported by external influences) for the allegiance of the tribes. The battle for the Afghan tribes provides the setting in which this power struggle occurs. The observed system consists of

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[89] Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: Afghanistan," *CIA World Factbook,* https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html (accessed August 2009). Some of the basic information on Afghanistan was obtained from the CIA World Factbook web site, as well as the authors personal experiences contributed to this narrative. The author was in Afghanistan as a civil affairs team leader.

[90] United Nations, "United Nations Children's Fund, Literacy Report," *UNICEF,* http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/afghanistan_statistics.html  (accessed August 2009).

an examination of tribes, the government of Afghanistan, the opposition to the government, and external actors. Pakistan intertwines so strongly with Afghanistan that a holistic study of their duel role of internal (their tribal link), and external (separate state status) is necessary.[91]

**AFGHANISTAN ENVIRONMENTAL SKETCH**
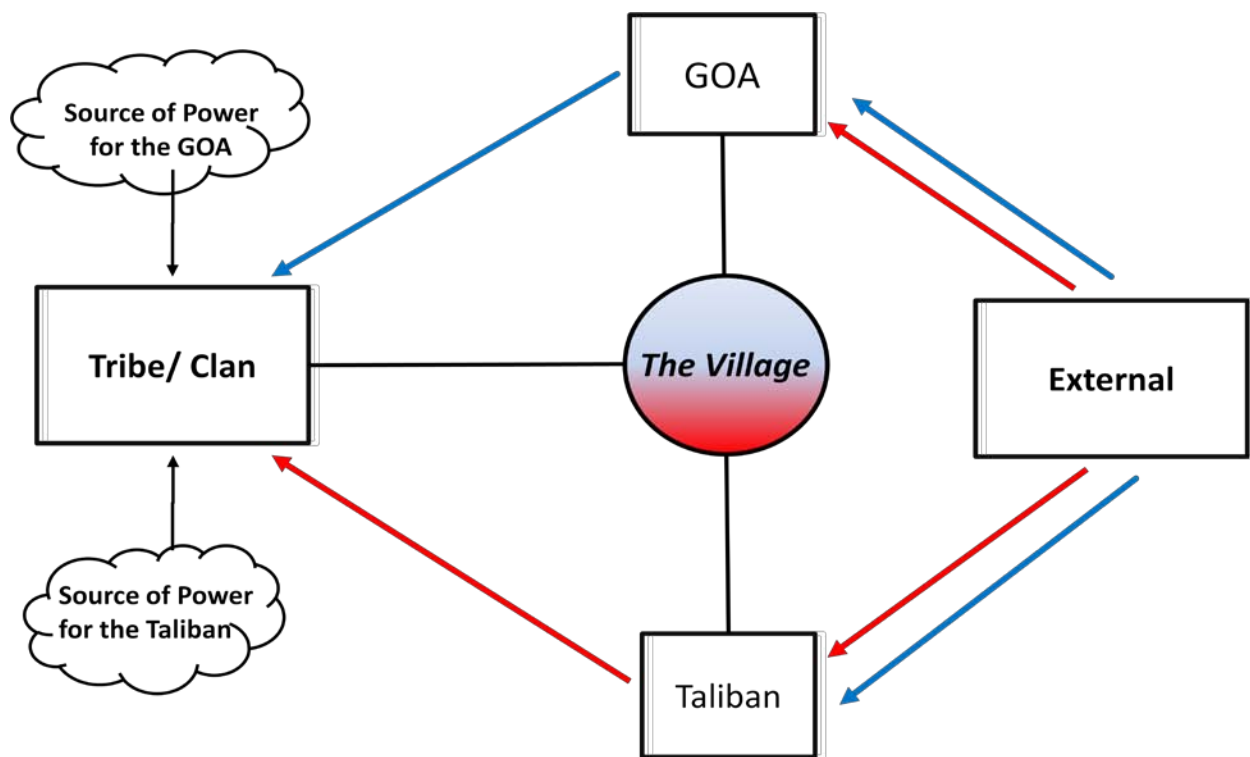


**FIGURE 3: ENVIRONMENTAL FRAME SKETCH**[92]

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[91] This monograph considers the Pashtun areas of Pakistan, specifically the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), one with Afghanistan. The official government of Pakistan is an external actor.

[92] Environmental sketch developed by SAMS Seminar 9. In the environmental sketch "GOA" stands for the Government of Afghanistan.

The insurgency in Afghanistan is well developed, and on its way to draining the resources and patience of all interested parties (both internationally and locally). Like the insurgency in El Salvador in the 1980s, the end of the Afghan insurgency will only come when there is a political solution in the wake of the Afghan populace being war-weary to the point of action.[93]

The current propensity of the system is for a divided Afghanistan. The United States and the international community will enable a strong central government that controls Kabul and other large urban centers. The Taliban and its allies will control rural communities in principally Pashtun-dominated areas in the east and south. Additionally, thirty years of war, combined with a centuries-old warrior culture, continues to further ignite tribal and ethnic tensions in their search for power in the country. Of vital importance is the understanding of the tendency for strong tribes to resist the Taliban; however, these same tribes also resist interference from the central government. Strong tribes tend to be independent and provide for themselves. Essentially, inaction and status quo leads more toward the adversary's desired system.

The most significant potential in the system is to rebalance Afghanistan's power structure. One key opportunity is the ability to increase the influence of the government at the district level. This level of government has the capacity to maintain a formal link to the national government while informally creating trust and cooperation with tribal leaders, whose participation legitimizes the government to the individual Afghan. Additionally, an alternative to the illegal narcotics trade is introduced through a combination of agricultural products and the retraining and retooling of district-level economies in order to reduce double-digit unemployment.

## Unresponsive Government (Fuel)

Governance and economics in Afghanistan are the primary components that construct the government's influence over the populace. The United Nations and the international community seek an

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[93] Benjamin C. Schwartz, *"American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and El Salvador: The Frustrations of Reform and Illusions of Nation Building,"* Prepared for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, National Defense Research Institute (Washington, D.C.: Rand Corporation, 1991), 38.

Afghan national government with the strength to maintain stability and security, deny sanctuary to terrorists, and provide basic services to its people. The government's current propensity is toward semi-autocracy – international funding remains with the ruling faction and there is little accountability placed on the government to build enduring institutions or to provide basic public services or good local governance. Furthermore, there are competing perspectives on the proper form and function of the governance of Afghanistan.[94]

As of July 2009, the Afghan government is structured into executive, legislative and judicial branches, and is intended to act at the national, provincial, district and local levels. However, there are large gaps in power and influence between the executive branch and the other two branches, as the legislative and judicial branches are weak at all levels. There is also a large gap in capabilities between the national government and provincial and local governments. Specifically, there is a substantial lack of governmental influence at the district and local levels, particularly in the areas outside the Ring Road.[95]

Traditional leaders at the local level, such as warlords and tribal leaders, currently fill the gaps in formal government capability. Further, in areas where tribal leadership is weak or where tribal sympathies are involved, the Taliban exploits the gaps by creating shadow governments at the district and local levels. These shadow governments, primarily led by mullahs, enforce fundamental Islamic Sharia Law in the areas they control through the threat of force and in opposition to the intention of the country's constitution.[96] Formal external influence into the governance system comes through the national

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[94] From the author in conversation with local and provincial leaders while in Afghanistan. The forms and functions are: An Islamic State, and therefore use of Sharia Law as demanded by the Taliban. A democracy with a strong central government promoted by President Karzai. A democracy with more provincial power as proposed by clan leaders and war lords.

[95] Based on the authors experience while in Afghanistan. Ron Synovitz, "Afghanistan: Ring Road's Completion Would Benefit Entire Region,"*Radio Free Europe.* October 10, 2007. http://www.rferl.org/content/article/1078916.html (accessed October 10, 2009). Synovitz states: "The "Ring Road", a highway that loops the rugged mountain terrain and sparsely populated countryside to connect its major cities.". Many of the roads that connect to the ring road are impassible and therefore governmental penetration has been a challenge.

[96] Pashtunwali is also a form of tribal law. Michael Scheuer, Retired CIA official, stated in an interview with the James Gordon Meek of the NY Daily News on September 15, 2009, " The Taliban are a Pashtun group, and Pashtun warlords give Al Qauda and Bin Laden sanctuary...it's a strong possibility that Pashtun allies of Al Qaeda operatives, harmed by at least 70 CIA predator missle strikes in the past year, would seek revenge here. The Tribal

government with minimal filtration to lower levels. Therefore, external actors inject informal influence on the lower levels via warlords (who either independently replace the government or align with the Taliban), tribal leaders, the Taliban and Al Qaeda from Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United States based on the motivations of those actors.

The Afghan National Army (ANA) provides a separate structure for the legitimacy of the government. The ANA, which provides district and local level security in some regions, receives its direction from the Ministry of Defense. Because of a lack of governmental synchronization, the ANA often competes for legitimacy with the provincial leadership and lacks coordination with district and local leadership. The ANA is another foreign actor to the rural Afghan, mainly due to the fact that they are usually not from the tribe within the area they are operating.

To the rural Afghan, both the government and the opposition are "foreign." Thus, proximity, persistence, and perspective determine actor legitimacy. Though every local tribe maintains unique characteristics, strong tribal structures are more immune to the effects of external factors. Weak tribes are influenced by the actions of the most proximate and persistent actor, whether government or opposition. Generally, strong tribes desire no external governance or support; they seek to remain self-sufficient. However, a weak tribe will seek external support to meet its needs. A rural Afghan's affinity to an external actor may depend on which actor can provide the immediate requirements, such as security or basic needs. Additionally, the perspective of each tribe will determine to whom they turn for support. Influential ties with, or feelings against, super-tribal actors may lead a strong tribe to turn toward, or away from, the government or the opposition. With some tribes, this perspective may trump an opportunity for better economic support. The combined pressures of proximity, presence, perspective, and provision generally determine which external actor a local clan and tribal organization will be drawn to, although any allegiance is transient.

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code known as "Pashtunwali"demands men avenge their relatives killings."
http://www.nydailynews.com/news/ny_crime/2009/09/16/2009-09-16_troubling_shift_to_american_soil.html
(accessed September 2009). Therefore Al-Qaeda manipulates the Pashtunwali code.

The economic support external to the government and the nation is a significant issue. The government budget runs a $291 million dollar deficit;[97] the United States and other donor nations are currently the main financer of the Afghan budget. Of the $9.8 billion stated as the nation's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), approximately $3 billion comes from the illegal drug trade,[98] with the remaining amounts split between international aid (3 billion dollars) and legitimate goods (3.8 billion dollars). International aid and drugs are problematic. Aid is not sustainable and tends to impart an autocratic government, and drugs are counterproductive to good governance. The current rate of unemployment is approximately 40 percent of the eligible work force.[99] This facilitates the insecurity of the population and provides another gap through which the Taliban and Al Qaeda can influence and recruit. Because economic aid provided by external sources remains with the elite and rarely reaches the general population, Afghans, particularly in southern and eastern Afghanistan, turn to the illegal drug trade to provide a source of income. Frequently, the Taliban, Al Qaeda or regional warlords co-opt the Afghans to produce drug resources, which, as a "lootable" industry, provide revenue to these opposition actors.

There is little doubt that the Afghan government is weak at governance; in fact, it was weak at governance under the Taliban well before the U.S. intervened in 2001. Therefore, based on their history, poor governance at the national level has not been a primary cause of the insurgency. Many experts blame the U.S. for trying to template a democratic system into a country (and a region) that does not have either the propensity or the potential to succeed in democratic governance unless the U.S. develops a plan that includes committing tens of thousands of soldiers and diplomats over a period of decades. Therefore, the

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[97] CIA World Factbook. Afghan budget revenues: $890 million. Expenditures: $2.7 billion. *note:* Afghanistan has also received $2.6 billion from the Reconstruction Trust Fund and $63 million from the Law and Order Trust Fund (2007 est.).

[98] United Nations. *World Drug Report 2009. (*New York: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2009). http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/opium-amounts-to-half-of-afghanistans-gdp-in-2007,-reports-unodc.html (accessed September, 2009).

[99] Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Factbook: Afghanistan," *CIA World Factbook,* https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/af.html (accessed August 2009).

focus should not be on governance at the national level, but on setting the conditions for governance at the local (village) level where the Taliban is hoping to find the tipping point for their influence.

The Afghans have always been used to living hand to mouth. As stated in Chapter 2, what may be considered "poor services" in one country may not have the same meaning in another. The insurgency did not start due to poor services. However, if the U.S. builds governance at the local level, and gives these tribal leaders the ability to govern with legitimacy- through humanitarian aid, or providing schooling for their children- this would eliminate the need for reliance on the Taliban.

In every country, whether the U.S. or Afghanistan, people want to feel secure. Although the "root cause" of the insurgency was not poor security, this condition has quickly moved center stage because it has been a tool used by those elements that want to oust the current government. The sole purpose of the violence is to discredit, and thus delegitimize, the government in the hopes of convincing the populace that the current government cannot secure them. In other words, although the root cause of the insurgency was not people feeling insecure, it has now become the main issue that will either keep the current government in power, or allow it to fail. Empowering the local tribal leaders to provide security for their areas, through national oversight, would significantly impact this problem.

## Political-Diplomatic (Heat)

Internal Heat: The true cause of the insurgency in Afghanistan has been political-diplomatic heat. When the U.S. disposed of the Taliban regime (the government of Afghanistan), it immediately created the base for an insurgency. No disposed government wants to be on the outside looking in, especially when it is overthrown by an external government.

The opposition is rooted in thirty years of conflict that, at its heart, is a symptom of the erosion of the social fabric. The traditional structure provides the essential functions one finds in society such as "a sense of community" (an element of identity), security, economic stability, and local governance. Thirty years of conflict eroded the human capital requirements of Afghanistan's society, and created a vacuum

that provided an opportunity for the Taliban to rise in power. The system of opposition exploits the deficiencies in a lack of traditional government functions at the local level to create a "national" movement. The opposition is able to operate in the rural areas primarily due to the poor penetration of the Government of Afghanistan.

The primary actor in the opposition is the Taliban.[100] The contribution of many of its current members to victory over the Soviets in the 1980s, although not organized as the Taliban organization as we know it today, provided iconic status to its madrassa-trained fighters. They then returned to their tribes, many bringing a militant ideology with them. Along with continued attendance at religious-based madrassas, created a surplus of military-aged males who were disenfranchised by the traditional social structure of Afghanistan; disenfranchised Pashtun, primarily from the Ghilzai tribe, found a niche with the Taliban. Others fragmented into other extremist groups, such as the Haqqani network and Hekmatyar's Hizb-I Islami.[101] Becoming more inclusive, the Taliban has expanded beyond the traditional Ghilzai faction of Pashtuns, reaching out to the Durrani tribe, the Haqqani network (Karlani Tribe) and Hizb-I Islami to create a much larger and more capable opposition actor. The leader of the resurgent Taliban, Mullah Omar, maintains sanctuary in the Baluchistan province of Pakistan, where he directs the organization's actions.

The major area of activity for anti-government forces is the Southern and Eastern regions of Afghanistan, primarily those occupied by Pasthtu tribes and the thousands of refugees that have been displaced throughout the past decade. This movement of displaced people creates instability, especially in a country whose borders are not clearly identifiable.

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[100] Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Wood, *"The Taliban: An Organizational Analysis."* Military Review (May-June, 2008), 58-73. Source for information on the Taliban history and organization.

[101] John Pike, *Federation of American Scientists (Intelligence Resource Programs).* http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/hizbi-islami.htm (accessed October 2009). One of the most disciplined of the guerrilla groups that fought against Soviet occupation. Following the Soviet withdrawal, the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) initially supported the Hizb-i-Islami under Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar to dislodge the Rabbani government. Pakistan feared that an exclusively non-Pashtun government of President B. Rabbani would lead Afghanistan's Pashtuns to revive the demand for Pashtunistan. Official name and organization.

The Haqqani network[102] is the dominant force in the East. In fact, Haqqani may be viewed as a franchise of the Taliban conglomerate. Haqqani is tied into the Taliban Shura in Peshwar and participated in the most recent Shura.[103] His influence in the East is the entity that holds the elements of the Taliban together in the AF-PAK border region. In fact, many of these groups that have been franchised regularly bleed over, and freely travel back and forth.

In the south, leadership comes from the Quetta Shura, directed by Mullah Omar.[104] The primary difference between the south and the east is a matter of composition and motivation. The majority of fighters in the south are local recruits who fight for basic needs, money, and ideology. The recruits are provided by local mullahs supported by the Taliban. Their primary motivation is to gain power in the future of Afghanistan.

In the east, the primary leaders are Hekmatyar[105] and Haqqani. The Taliban in the east are born from a xenophobic, warrior culture and fight exclusively for Pashtun autonomy. The purpose is to ensure that the Taliban ideology is not being dissolved due to the expansion of the Taliban to less ideological groups and members.

A subordinate[106] actor in the opposition, Al Qaeda, enjoys sanctuary in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. Al Qaeda supports the Taliban and recognizes the Taliban as an equal co-partner in Afghanistan. Personal relationships between Haqqani, Hekmatyar and Al Qaeda leadership date back to the Soviet-Afghan War. Furthermore, the Taliban is more acceptable to the local population and it

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[102] Jalaluddin Haqqani is a Pashtu warlord and former Soviet resistance commander that is based in Waziristan (Ghanzi, Pakita, Paktika and Khost). Along the Pakistan border, and part of the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. The Haqqani network is an independent insurgent network that aligns itself with various Al Qaeda elements.

[103] Shura: An Arabic word for "consultation". It is believed to be the method by which pre-Islamic Arabian Tribes selected leaders and made major decisions. Shura is mentioned twice in the Koran as a praiseworthy activity, and is used in Muslim-majority countries.

[104] Rashid, Taliban (2001), 23:The leader of the Taliban. An ethnic Pashtun a member of the Hotak tribe, of the Ghilzai branch of the Pashtun in Kandahar Province in southern Afghanistan.

[105] An early Pashtu rebel that fought against the Soviet occupation. Former Prime Minister of Afghanistan, he is the founder and leader of the Hezb-Islami political party.

[106] Meaning a lesser player, and among the populace are mainly considered outsiders.

has extended the cultural norm of pashtunwali to Al Qaeda. The population permits Al Qaeda to exist with relative security, which allows it to focus on the regional/global jihad. Al Qaeda does not view the local fight in Afghanistan and Pakistan as a lesser fight, but as the first critical step in the strategy to bring about a Sunni Islamic revolution. In the future, Al Qaeda may focus more of its resources and efforts on the success of the Taliban.

The Taliban's propensity is to understand and use its environment; further, its doctrine allows for tactics that the U.S. and others consider terrorism, such as intimidation and attacks on Tribal leaders. For example, in November of 2008, Taliban militants attacked Pakistani tribal leaders near the Afghan border due to the tribal militias attacks on Taliban. The bomb attack killed four elders.[107] As noted above, the strategy of the Taliban is to continue to use the tribal system to further its objectives. If the government is failing to penetrate to the local level, whether due to lack of effort by the government or lack of receptiveness by the tribe, the Taliban may fill the void by providing employment, security and other basic needs. For the Taliban's services, it can reasonably be assumed that some tribes provide local fighters, intelligence, funds (likely in the form of zakat), logistics, and sanctuary. In turn, this relationship reflects cultural, moral, and practical sources of power for the Taliban.[108]

The narcotics trade is a unique system component comprised of farmers, laborers, landowners and traffickers. The narcotic trade system ties directly to the government's weak support of the tribes. The opposition leverages the government's weakness to further its own activities. Additionally, important government officials receive economic incentive from the narcotics trade. Tribes that support the drug trade often do so because there is no economic alternative – the government has failed to provide the necessary economic structure for basic sustainment, including access to land, water and agricultural supplies. Further, individuals in the government may utilize their position for personal gain by facilitating

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[107] CBS News Report, *"Seven Die in Taliban Attack On Tribal Leaders",* November 18, 2008, http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2008/11/18/terror/main4613073.shtml?source=RSSattr=HOME_4613073 (accessed July, 2009).

[108] Department of the Army, *"My Cousin's Enemy is My Friend: A Study of Pashtun "Tribes" in Afghanistan",* Whitepaper, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Afghanistan Research Reachback Center, September 2009, 16.

the drug trade through relationships with informal leaders. Another possibility for tribal involvement in drugs is a loss of craftsmanship, and other real job skills, that were once indigenous to the society. An example is Afghan pottery that at one time was a major export product of Afghanistan. The assumption is that many of these skills have been lost due to 30 years of conflict and "a generation lost." Another possibility of why tribes have become involved in drugs and supportive of the Taliban is to fill the void of security and leadership left from the generational loss of males due to war from 1979 to the present. Lastly, a contributor to the promulgation of narcotics is a drought that occurred from 1998 to 2001, and the government's subsequent failure to provide access to water for agricultural purposes. Finally, the drug laborers are migratory; their movement throughout the country facilitates the sharing of production knowledge.[109]

The Taliban and Al Qaeda desire involvement in the drug market because of the large amounts of money made from their export and sales in the west, particularly in Western European markets, and to Russia, Iran and the Central Asian Republics. Additionally, as a symbol of western decadence, drug trafficking is viewed as a method of taking the war to the infidel. To ensure the success of the narcotics business, the Taliban and Al Qaeda have removed or executed tribal leaders who were not willing to participate and replaced them with willing participants.[110] Weak governance, collusion with government officials, and poor security force penetration allow the narcotic system to continue.

The opposition has two objectives. The first is to re-conquer Afghanistan, and second, is to create a caliphate within the greater Middle East. To understand the opposition's methodology, the counterinsurgent must also understand the timeline in which it plans to attain its goals –in decades rather

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[109] William Byrd and Christopher Ward, *"Drugs and Development in Afghanistan",* The World Bank, Social Development Paper #30903, no. 18 (December, 2004),10.

[110] Department of the Army, *"My Cousin's Enemy is My Friend: A Study of Pashtun "Tribes" in Afghanistan",* Whitepaper, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Afghanistan Research Reachback Center, September 2009, 17.

than years.[111] Therefore, a slow, clan-by-clan, province-by-province strategy is in line with its long-term desired end state.

In its movement through the rural areas towards its objective, the opposition has initiated a supporting information operation (IO) campaign to reinforce the legitimacy of its movement. It has, at one time or another, chosen to use one of several IO themes. 1) The Taliban is the legitimate government in exile. 2) Foreign invaders are occupying your homeland. 3) The Taliban can, will and do provide for your basic needs (Pashtunwali[112] and Zakat[113]). 4) The Taliban provide stability through security (justice via Sharia Law[114]). 5) The Taliban allow for local decision making through the existing tribe/clan infrastructure. 6) The Taliban provide religious education and support that the national government has not provided. 7) A predominantly non-Pashtu government, controlled by foreign invaders subjugates the population. The adversary now has its objective, its message, and will utilize a methodology that brings it from a position of weakness to a position of strength through the populace.[115]

The current oppositional system can be compared to that of a franchise system. The Taliban organization (the franchisor), has a successful product or service (offering local Afghanis those things the government has been unable to provide: education for youth, income (albeit through illicit trade and narco-business). It then enters into a relationship with other individuals (tribe/clan leaders) as franchisees who operate under the franchisor's name and usually with the franchisor's guidance (IO support,

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[111] Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Wood, *"The Taliban: An Organizational Analysis."* Military Review (May-June, 2008), 64. The second objective is specific to al-Qaeda. It is not necessarily the objective of the Taliban, criminal elements, or other external actors simply because they have alliances with each other.

[112] "National War College Brief, 5606-AY 2009". Pashtunwali: Code of honor among the Pashtuns of Afghanistan and Pakistan. A set of rules guiding both individual and communal behavior. Rooted in Islam.

[113] Zakat: Means grow (in goodness) or 'increase', 'purifying' or 'making pure'. So, the act of giving zakat means purifying one's wealth to gain Allah's blessing to make it grow in goodness. The Zakat is a form of giving to those who are less fortunate. It is obligatory upon all Muslims to give 2.5 % of wealth and assets each year (in excess of what is required) to the poor. http://www.zikr.co.uk/books/Zakaat.html, pg.14 (accessed September, 2009)

[114] Sharia Law: is the body of Islamic religious law. The term means "way" or "path to the water source". It is the legal framework within which the public and private aspects of life are regulated for those living in a legal system based on Islamic principles of jurisprudence and for Muslims living outside the domain. *Sharia* deals with many aspects of day-to-day life, including politics, economics, banking, business, contracts, family, sexuality, hygiene, and social issues. From author in discussions with numerous afghans.

[115] Thomas H. Johnson and Chris M. Mason, *"Understanding the Taliban and Insurgency in Afghanistan,"* Orbis: the Foreign Policy Research Institute Quarterly Journal (Winter 2007), 74.

manpower, initial seed money, manpower support) in exchange for a fee (returning future income from illicit activities-Salaan).[116]

The Taliban franchise system has two approaches. The first approach, and the most desired, is that of finding a market for their service (vulnerable population). The second approach is intimidation. Although this approach is the less desirable, it has proven successful, as it relies on the fears of the populace, and the fact that the populace has little or no confidence in the government to protect them.[117]

The adversary has five organizational levels that implement its strategy. First are the core Taliban, the ideological standard-bearers. Their function is to maintain the fundamental religious base, provide seed money, national IO support, manpower, and weapons to those who will move through the tribes and clans and establish control (the "Talib"). Second are the madrassa students who allow the Taliban to branch out to other areas, or remain to support the core. Third are the warlords and influencers. The function of these individuals is to accept and then influence local tribal leaders into receiving the Taliban. However, the Taliban has its biggest challenge at this level considering the national governments to this point have co-opted their loyalty by including them in the national government, or by allowing the autonomy within their area of influence. The fourth level is the external roaming "Talib,"[118] the faithful soldiers of the Taliban, and includes independent opportunists (who act as couriers). Their function is to move in groups of ten to fifty and establish control of a population center through either coercion or intimidation. Their strength is drawn from the following points: 1) They can maintain freedom of movement; 2) They supply local intelligence to the core element; 3) Once control is established, they return illicit funds to the core for reinvestment; and 4) They base their recruitment efforts on the cultural norm of Pashtunwali. Finally, the tribe and clan members can become part of the organization.[119]

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[116] Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Wood, *"The Taliban: An Organizational Analysis."* Military Review (May-June, 2008), 65.

[117] Ibid, pg. 68.

[118] Talib is an Arabic word meaning "one who is seeking" but the word has evolved to mean "someone who is seeking religious knowledge. The author acquired knowledge through conversations with local Mullah's in Afghanistan.

[119] Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Woods, *"The Taliban: An Organizational Analysis"*, 65.

The internal heat created by the invasion and overthrow of the Taliban government had a twofold problem. First, the government that was disposed was mainly Pashtun, and the force being supported by the U.S. was mainly Tajik. Second, Afghanistan has a history of resisting and, in their minds, defeating, a superpower (the Soviet Union). The internal heat was created by the U.S. taking the side of the rival Pashtun, and these elements of the former regime would not just go away.

The tribe has been the base unit for the management and control of the Afghan people for centuries, and continues to be the strongest influence for cohesion in the country. A strong central government and an extremist opposition (Taliban and Al Qaeda), both of which are "foreign" to the tribal way of life, currently threaten this system. Each tribe is unique in its ability to provide for its members' basic needs and in the importance of its ethnic, religious and cultural ties and sympathies. Additionally, identity as a Muslim influences individual and tribal Afghan participation in either the government or the opposition structure. In general, however, with the exception of the Taliban, tribal allegiance is usually of a higher priority than the Muslim identity in Afghanistan.[120]

The minority tribes, primarily located in the north and west, and of Tajik, Uzbek and Turkmen ethnicity, are generally the most stable. However, the leaders of these tribes have traditionally been warlords whose motivations are personal, working for the good of the nation as it suits their interest. Additionally, some of these tribes meet their needs by drug trafficking through Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan in the north and into Iran in the west.[121]

The two majority tribes in Afghanistan, the Durrani and Ghilzai, are the current catalysts for conflict in the country. Primarily located along the eastern and southern borders, ethnicity (Pashtun) and religion (Sunni Islam) join these tribes together. They comprise the Pashtun majority. Both tribes extend beyond Afghanistan's border into Pakistan and both are active participants in illegal drug trafficking and

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[120] Philip C. Salzman, *"The Middle East's Tribal DNA",* The Middle East Quarterly XV, no. 1 (Winter 2008), 23-33. Also, reinforced by authors personal experience, through discussions with local leaders in the north and eastern regions of Afghanistan while deployed as a Civil Affairs team leader in 2002.

[121] Federation of American Scientists, *"International Crime Threat Assessment",* Chapter 3, December 15, 2001, pg. 14. Raphael F. Perl, *"Taliban and the Drug Trade",* CRS Report for Congress, October 5, 2001,4.

illegal trade to support their activities, yet each retains unique characteristics and motivations. In the east, the Ghilzai tribe is a warrior culture whose propensity is to seek battle in order to establish Pashtun autonomy. The Ghilzai were the core of the initial Taliban movement in the 1990s. The Durrani tribe, located on the southern border, strives to dominate the power structure in the country.[122]

Traditionally, the competition between the Ghilzai tribe and the Durrani tribe has provided a balance of power; however, some elements from the tribal factions forged a loose alliance to create the government's primary opposition, the Taliban. Because of their border location, tribal activity in Pakistan greatly influences the Afghan Pashtuns. The Taliban in Pakistan (TP) is a cleric-led movement dedicated to imposing a Paki-Islamic government. TP fosters support relationships with drug traffickers, the ISI[123] and Al Qaeda, and those relationships translate across the border to the TP's Pashtun brothers. The tribal relationships with the government and with the Taliban opposition provide the key dynamic in this environment.

As the Taliban was driven east towards Pakistan by the Northern Alliance and U.S. Special Operations Forces, its organization was disrupted and its funding sources were cut. However, as time went by, it melded into  areas within Pakistan, along the western border) and re-established control of those areas of Pakistan that would fund its future insurgent activities – the SWAT area, which has timber and jewels that can sustain its operations.[124]

External Heat: Multiple external influences provide both positive and negative pressure on the Afghan system. Continuing strife in Pakistan, national interests of Iran, Russian, Indian, Chinese, and Saudi Arabia in the Afghanistan-Pakistan region (AFPAK),[125] international opinion and support, and the

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[122] Peter R. Blood, *"Afghanistan: A Country Study"*, http://countrystudies.us/afghanistan/38.htm (accessed September, 2009).

[123] The Directorate for Inter-Service Intelligence is the largest intelligence service in Pakistan. It is one of the main branches of Pakistani intelligence agencies. Federation of American Scientists, *Intelligence Resource Program,* http://www.fas.org/irp/world/pakistan/isi/ (accessed September, 2009).

[124] Animesh Roul, *"Gems, Timber and Jiziya: Pakistan's Taliban Harness Resources to Fund Jihad",* Terrorism Monitor VII, issue 11 (The Jamestown Foundation, April 30, 2009): 9.

[125] The Afghanistan-Pakistan (AFPAK) is specifically the nation of Afghanistan, and the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan.

overall Islamic movement are each uniquely relevant factors on the system. External actors are regional, international, and Western, and may or may not operate within the borders of Afghanistan. Other international actors and transnational actors include international organizations, criminal elements, and terrorist organizations. Each of these should be viewed through their impact on economy, security and governance.

Pakistan's role in the environment is significant enough to warrant considering it as a separate entity apart from other external actors. Pakistan's involvement with the efforts in Afghanistan is not exactly as it appears on the surface. Pakistan is the greatest regional exporter to Afghanistan and has pledged its support to the Afghan government.[126] However, Pakistan also provides nearly impenetrable sanctuary to terrorists and the Taliban, provides fighters and educational opportunities to the Taliban, has difficulty protecting coalition LOCs, and is deeply embroiled in its own instability issues, particularly in the Northwest Frontier Provinces and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and in Baluchistan. India-Pakistan hostilities greatly affect Pakistan's ability to focus on internal security issues. Additionally, the public sentiment in Pakistan holds that the country is fighting a U.S. war that is not in the best interest of Pakistan. Pakistan, while intimately involved in the Taliban fight, maintains a propensity to see this struggle as secondary to its stand-off with its traditional nemesis, India.[127] Diplomatic engagement regarding the tensions between Pakistan and India is risky, but should the United States advocate a reduction of Indian pressure on Pakistan, it could have an influence on Pakistan's willingness to concentrate on the Taliban. This strategy could backfire and result in increased extremist violence with the purpose of eroding trust and undermining U.S. efforts.

Although Pakistan is not external to the AFPAK problem due to historical and cultural ties with Afghanistan, the Pakistani government and military provides an external influence in Afghanistan.

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[126] Central Intelligence Agency, "Pakistan," *The World Factbook,* Pakistan is the largest exporter to Afghanistan, with around US$ 1.7 billion in exports annually, which accounts for 36.8 percent of Afghan imports and 8.4 percent of Pakistan's exports. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/, (accessed April , 2009).

[127] Jayshree Bajoria, *"India-Afghanistan Relation",* Council on Foreign Relations article, July 22, 2009, http://www.cfr.org/publication/17474/indiaafghanistan_relations.html (accessed August, 2009).

Pakistan's small country syndrome and ongoing insecurity issues with India enable the Pakistan military and Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) to create conditions conducive to Afghanistan's instability. The Pakistan military employs the bulk of its forces at its eastern border with India in order to prevent a perceived threat of Indian invasion. The subsequent lack of government control allows for ungoverned areas in Pakistan's Northwest and tribal regions, and provides sanctuary for transnational groups which conduct cross-border operations, causing continuous instability in Afghanistan. Pakistan's ISI also supports certain factions of the Taliban that promote its goal of maintaining a certain level of instability within Afghanistan to ensure a legitimate military and economic rival does not develop to its west.[128]

Iran, focused primarily on its own security, supports the end of Taliban advances in order to avoid a Sunni extremist regime in Afghanistan. Iranian actions include surveillance, drug trafficking and support to NATO Lines Of Communication (LOC's) and potentially limited support to anti-coalition elements. Iran, as a traditional U.S. foe, engages in actions directly opposed to NATO efforts, such as intelligence collection within AFPAK. However, the large-scale poppy production in Afghanistan directly affects the Iranian domestic population (estimated 0.7 to 1.6 million "drug addicts" in Iran).[129] U.S. coordination with Iran has the propensity to be hampered by the country's perception that the U.S. is a greater threat than Sunni extremist objectives. Other matters and tensions, such as Iranian access to nuclear power, overshadow the Southwest Asian regional issues. Increased U.S. coordination efforts could lead to misperceptions, further eroding trust-levels.

Saudi Arabia seeks status as the region's power broker in opposition to Iran. This conflict has persisted since the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. As Iranian influence has grown in the Middle East (Southern Iraq, Southern Lebanon (Hezbollah), Gaza Strip (Hamas) and western Afghanistan), Saudi Arabia has countered by spreading its influence outside the Sunni Arab region. Accompanied by funding

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[128] Jayshree Bajoria, *"Obama's Pakistan Challenge"*, Council on Foreign Relations article, January 2, 2009, http://www.cfr.org/publication/18114/obamas_pakistan_challenge.html (accessed August, 2009).

[129] United Nations. *World Drug Report 2009. (*New York: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2009), 53. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/opium-amounts-to-half-of-afghanistans-gdp-in-2007,-reports-unodc.html (accessed September, 2009). Information obtained from the Drug Control Headquarters of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Policies, Achievements, Ongoing Programs and Future Plans, Tehran, 2007.

from the United States during the Soviet-Afghan War, Pakistani religious madrassas have received funding from Saudi Arabia since 1988. Because of issues with Wahabbi extremists in 1979, the Saudi government began a practice of deporting extremists to the AFPAK region. The practice continues today. Though the ruling al Saud family has expressed outrage at the extremist message preached at Pakistani madrassas, funding continues from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states through Islamic charities to Pakistan and other Islamic extremist groups.[130]

Russia seeks to maintain influence in the region and support the suppression of a radical Islamic Afghanistan. Russian organized crime elements facilitate drug trafficking from Afghanistan along Lines of Communication (LOC) by smuggling through Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan. Significant to coalition efforts in Afghanistan is Russia's facilitation of coalition resupply through its territory. Russia also does not desire an extremist country bordering its southern area of influence.[131]

Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan have normal relations, both nationally and locally, with Afghanistan, primarily through trade. Ethnic factions of each of these nations reside in northern Afghanistan. Additionally, these former Soviet states continue to be susceptible to Russian influence and are key actors in drug transshipment out of Afghanistan and on coalition LOCs. Also contributing to the economic issues in AFPAK is the fact that the neighboring countries have limited economic viability. This results in their inability to control the border with Afghanistan or to support security objectives in the region. The less viable states, such as Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, also align themselves with more economically powerful states, such as Russia, further increasing competition with Afghanistan.[132]

The regional power states of Russia, China, and India have differing national interests in the AFPAK region. However, there has been no diplomatic unity of effort between these states because the

[130] Romesh Ratnesar, *"Confessions of an Al-Qaeda Terrorist"* Time, September 15, 2002. www.time.com/time/magazine/printout/0,8816,351194,00.html (accessed August, 2009).

[131] Roman Muzalevsky, *"The Russia-Afghan Forum: A Russian Marshal Plan for Afghanistan",* Central Asia-Caucasus Institute, June 17, 2009. http://www.cacianalyst.org/?q=node/5132 (accessed July, 2009).

[132] Michael W. Cotter, *"Afghanistan and it's Neighbors",* University of North Carolina, Contribution to the University of North Carolina, American Diplomacy. http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/archives_roll/2001_10-12/cotter_mideast/cotter_mideast.html (accessed July 2009).

security situation in the region has not reached the threshold that requires their increased interest (i.e., non-secure Pakistani nuclear weapons). China's interest in the region is economic, focused on building access to natural resources and building markets for their exports. The propensity of these actors is to continue to act in their own self-interest while continuing to push their foreign policies to meet their individual requirements and avoid conducting overt actions in the region.

Multiple non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide resources at the district/local level in order to meet the basic needs of the population. Other notable external environmental factors include European public support for NATO participation and international aid flowing into Afghanistan from multiple donors. Other external actors in the region include those entities that provide charitable contributions/humanitarian support to AFPAK. Muslim countries, particularly Saudi Arabia, provide direct support as part of their religious obligation for alms giving (Zakat). Additionally, zakat contributions fund some NGOs/IGOs in Afghanistan.[133] Unfortunately, a portion of the zakat supports terrorist and Taliban activities, unbeknownst to some benefactors. The propensity of this system is that these countries will continue to provide zakat to the region without any restriction on the use of the funds. Tensions result from differing views on the definition of "humanitarian support." What NATO sees as support to terrorists may be seen as purely Wahhabi Islamic education by Muslim nations. Attempts by NATO countries, in particular the United States, to regulate the zakat funds may be detrimental because it would be seen by Islamic nations as overstepping their boundaries.

A plethora of NGOs/IGOs affect the AFPAK region. Because they frequently promote their own agendas, this leads to an overall uncoordinated effort in Afghanistan. However, regulation may render them unwilling to continue their operations. Because the Afghan government requires their presence, they are unlikely to place regulations upon them. Thus, the propensity of the NGOs/IGOs is to continue to provide uncoordinated support. The tension is found in competing efforts to improve the nation, and contributes further to the lack of unity of effort by the international community.

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[133] Subcommittee on International Trade and Finance of the Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs *"The Role of Charities and NGO's in the Financing of Terror Activities",*(Washington, D.C.,( U.S. Government Printing Office, August, 2002),5.

Al Qaeda, as a transnational actor, and the Taliban, as a fragmented group, are not always a unified force. They should not be seen as one enemy. While they practice mutual reinforcement, there is also tension based on their differing agendas and objectives. A NATO effort to divide these two factions may further reinforce their relationship or may lead to further fragmentation, particularly if conducted as a GoA-led effort.

Internationally, NATO countries currently have major issues with unity of effort in Afghanistan. The tendency of these states is to continue in their strained relationships, guided by their self-interest. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), as the "on-the-ground" force, requires greater contributions (civilian support, troops, and logistics) from the respective contributor nations. Efforts such as European police training missions, NATO training efforts, and programs to streamline prison management are missing support required to accomplish the task requested. There is a propensity for unilateral efforts, competition for resources, and a systemic lack of coordination. Additional programs could initially be hampered by varied perceptions of need and, without plug and play solutions, may evoke even greater division of effort.

There is much discourse whether elements (either governments or organizations) external to the Afghan-Pakistan region are funding the insurgents within Afghanistan. Although this may be true, it really has minimal impact on the current insurgency, as they currently have a funding source that can still maintain their operations. This is in addition to funding received from promoting poppy production within the region (see the Taliban Franchise Model described above).

## Structures and Vulnerability (Oxygen)

Afghans are vulnerable to insurgent activity based on several recent factors. First, considering their long association with the current conflict, their economy is in serious distress. However, as vulnerable a population as they are, this did not cause the insurgency, it only perpetuates it. Now the government becomes the scapegoat for all of the Afghan economic ills.

Second, the historical background of Afghanistan, and the diverse make-up of their culture (structure)[134] suggests that they will be independent in their thinking, and thus not having an inclination towards national unity or a strong central government. Combine that with the geography, the conditions are set for a fractured, vulnerable population that resists central or external control. This is where the Taliban and their supporting organizations build their support, and thus grow their membership and appeal (The Taliban Franchise Model)- within the local villages, and appealing to the independent nature of Afghans.

Third, the north is relatively peaceful. This can be attributed to the fact that the government that was disposed of came from the southeast regions, and the group that disposed them were mainly from the "Northern" Alliance. They are more content than the Pashtus regarding the structure of the central government due to their lower emphasis on tribal ties. Add to that their historical, cultural, and economic ties to the former Soviet states, and they are less likely to become involved in an insurgency.

## Information/Population (Chain Reaction)

Considering the lack of a well developed 21st century information infrastructure within Afghanistan, the majority of Afghans obtain their information through word of mouth or radio. However, key influencers, such as warlords, elites, and major tribal leaders do have access to television and the internet.

The demographic make-up of the population in Afghanistan is complex; having many different ethnicities, tribal affiliations and languages. This can make developing complex messages difficult, as one message to one group may alienate another. For instance, promoting woman's rights may be acceptable in

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[134]Department of the Army, *"My Cousin's Enemy is My Friend: A Study of Pashtun "Tribes" in Afghanistan",* Whitepaper, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Afghanistan Research Reachback Center, September 2009, 17. A Study of Pashtun "Tribes" in Afghanistan describes how tribal structures can contribute to vulnerability of a segment of society.

certain northern villages[135], but will cause considerable consternation in the southeast where a more traditional role for woman is the norm, and not ironically the Taliban stronghold.

The Taliban and Al Qaeda, well versed in the way Afghans communicate, utilize all aspects of information to influence the population. For instance, a report by the Royal Danish Defense College states, "The Taliban uses propaganda, contact to local leaders, posture and sometimes assistance to the local populace as means (to obtain effects)."[136] The point is, they do not need a 21st century infrastructure or large financial resources to communicate their IO message, and win over the populace. All they need is a message that is believable (or plausible) that can be sold to the Afghan population. As the Taliban and Al Qaeda continue to control the information in one village, it creates a chain reaction to other villages, as the counterinsurgents have no presence, and therefore no message that can counter the insurgents message

## Summary

The recurring focus areas within the environmental frame are: external factors, the Taliban, the tribe/clan, Pakistan, and the governance of Afghanistan. In the observed system, the centrally administered government fails to penetrate to a majority of rural areas and fails to provide basic needs (security, education, law, economy). The Taliban then fills the void, and provides local governance in many of the rural regions of Afghanistan implementing their version of the oil spot[137]. The local community is built upon a tribe/clan affiliation that has scarce resources and limited participation in governmental process. External organizations and states demonstrate limited willingness and capability to

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[135] Based on author's experience in Konduz in northern Afghanistan where many of the people were more open to the role of woman in receiving education and other rights that were not as accepted in the southeast. In fact, the leaders in Konduz requested that we build a woman's college which demonstrated their interests in women issues.

[136] Thomas Elkger Nissen, *"The Talibans Information Warfare: A Comparative Analysis of NATO Information Operations (IO) and Taliban Information Operations"* ,Royal Danish Defense College, Faculty of Strategy and Military Operations, December, 2007, 5.

[137] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-18, "COIN efforts should begin by controlling key areas. Security and influence then spread out from secured areas. The pattern of this approach is to clear, hold, and build one village, area, or city - and then reinforce success by expanding to other areas."

facilitate the long-term development and stability of Afghanistan, which results in the inconsistent application of meaningful assistance.

The Taliban and Al Qaeda have taken the initiative regarding the information war, and have learned to use both traditional and 21st century methods to relay their simple messages to the populace through local tribal and international mediums. In other words, although their approach to defeating the U.S. is somewhat primitive, their use of information is very modern, and the combination of the two is taking the initiative away from the U.S.

The current governmental structure developed by the Afghan government, with encouragement from the international community, has created the vulnerability to insurgent forces (the oxygen) who use the historical propensity of Afghans to be independent. Therefore, the fuel (unresponsive government due to a lack of penetration), and the heat created due to a disgruntled local populace, have set the conditions for a chain reaction (information and populace support) to be exploited by the insurgents.


# AFGHANISTAN: RECOMMENDATION FOR ACTION

Counterinsurgents in Afghanistan must look at what is possible (potential), and what is likely (propensity) within the political realm of the national (and international) strategic objective.[138] The U.S., in both Iraq and Afghanistan, did not face an insurgency at the start of those conflicts, but rather, upon disposing of those regimes, created a de-facto insurgency based on the former regime elements desiring to regain power. The counterinsurgent must understand the environment, take the facts, consider the trajectory of the conflict, and find the "best" solution to the insurgency.

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[138] Obama, Barack. *"A New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan"*, The White House, June 2009. www.whitehouse.gov/blog/09/03/27/A-new-strategy-for-afghanistan-and-pakistan/ (accessed September 3, 2009). Based on President Obama's Afghan guidance: U.N. Security Council Resolutions, Reaffirming its previous resolutions on Afghanistan, in particular its resolutions 1378 (2001) of 14 November 2001 and 1383 (2001) of 6 December 2001, Supporting international efforts to root out terrorism, in keeping with the Charter of the United Nations, and reaffirming also its resolutions 1368 (2001) of 12 September 2001 and 1373 (2001) of 28 September 2001.

The primary goal of a COIN operation is eliminating the cause of the insurgency. However, identifying a cause is one thing, and being able to sustain and grow support for that cause is quite another. The U.S. had its chance at putting out the smoldering fire that became the insurgency early in OEF, but was unprepared to act, and therefore allowed the cause to continue to burn and spread. Therefore, the U.S. must focus on interdicting the growth of that cause that has developed a life of its own.

The U.S. must act like a firefighter that just arrived at a fire. First, it must go to the source of the fire and put it out (the root cause); at the same time, it must contain the fire so it does not spread. The key step (finding the root cause), may appear obvious, but will require further investigation (intelligence gathering). During this process, counterinsurgents should also look for ways to prevent future similar incidents, and take into consideration if the community is willing or able to rebuild.

## Put the Insurgent Fire Out

In Afghanistan, the insurgent fire is in the southeast. The insurgency has not yet spread to the north or west in any significant measure. Therefore, the U.S. must mass its forces on the clear objective in the east and south, employ an economy of force operation in the north and west, and focus on the simple objective of taking back the loyalty of the local (tribal) leaders within the villages in the SE. This will ensure the insurgency is cut-off from the people through protection of the local leaders, a coordinated IO campaign that simplifies the message, and sufficient local funding to allow the local leaders to cut ties with the insurgent and also extract themselves from the narco-trafficking business. Governance will then be within Afghanistan's propensity, at the local (village) level, and within its potential ( a democratic approach), with limited national interference, taking into account the historical and current constructs of the Afghan people.

## Core Elements

Fuel (Unresponsive Government): Although the national government has failed to penetrate at the local level, this element is not as critical to ending the insurgency considering the historical propensity of

Afghans to do things for themselves. However, fuel must be present to facilitate the other elements of the fire model to ignite, and it is currently present in Afghanistan.

Heat (Diplomatic and Political): There is clearly an abundant amount of friction, and therefore heat, within Afghanistan that can ignite an insurgency. However, due to the numerous warlords, tribal leaders, Taliban leaders and the like, the distribution of heat among the various elements makes it impossible to target one internal or external element that can make the insurgency unsustainable.

Oxygen (Structure and Vulnerability): Considering the Taliban, with the support of their associated organizations,[139] have publicly stated their desire to regain power in Afghanistan,[140] some core elements will continue to attempt to displace and disrupt the democratically elected government. Thus, based on a good environmental frame and the Fire Model of Insurgency, the one area that counterinsurgents can focus on to make the insurgency unsustainable is the "Structures and Vulnerability" aspect of the Fire Model, the oxygen. Specifically, the counterinsurgent should develop the capacity for governance at the "local" level that the insurgents are currently controlling, both physically and mentally, usurping the legitimacy of the Afghan governance at all levels. Considering the history of Afghanistan, this exploitation is not surprising. Afghans' independent nature and their distrust of a strong central government dates back centuries, and the opposition knows this.

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[139] The Taliban is the core element of the insurgency, and AQ aids their organization when is serves its purpose to do so.

[140] Shahid Afsar, Chris Samples, and Thomas Wood, *"The Taliban: An Organizational Analysis."* Military Review (May-June, 2008), 64.
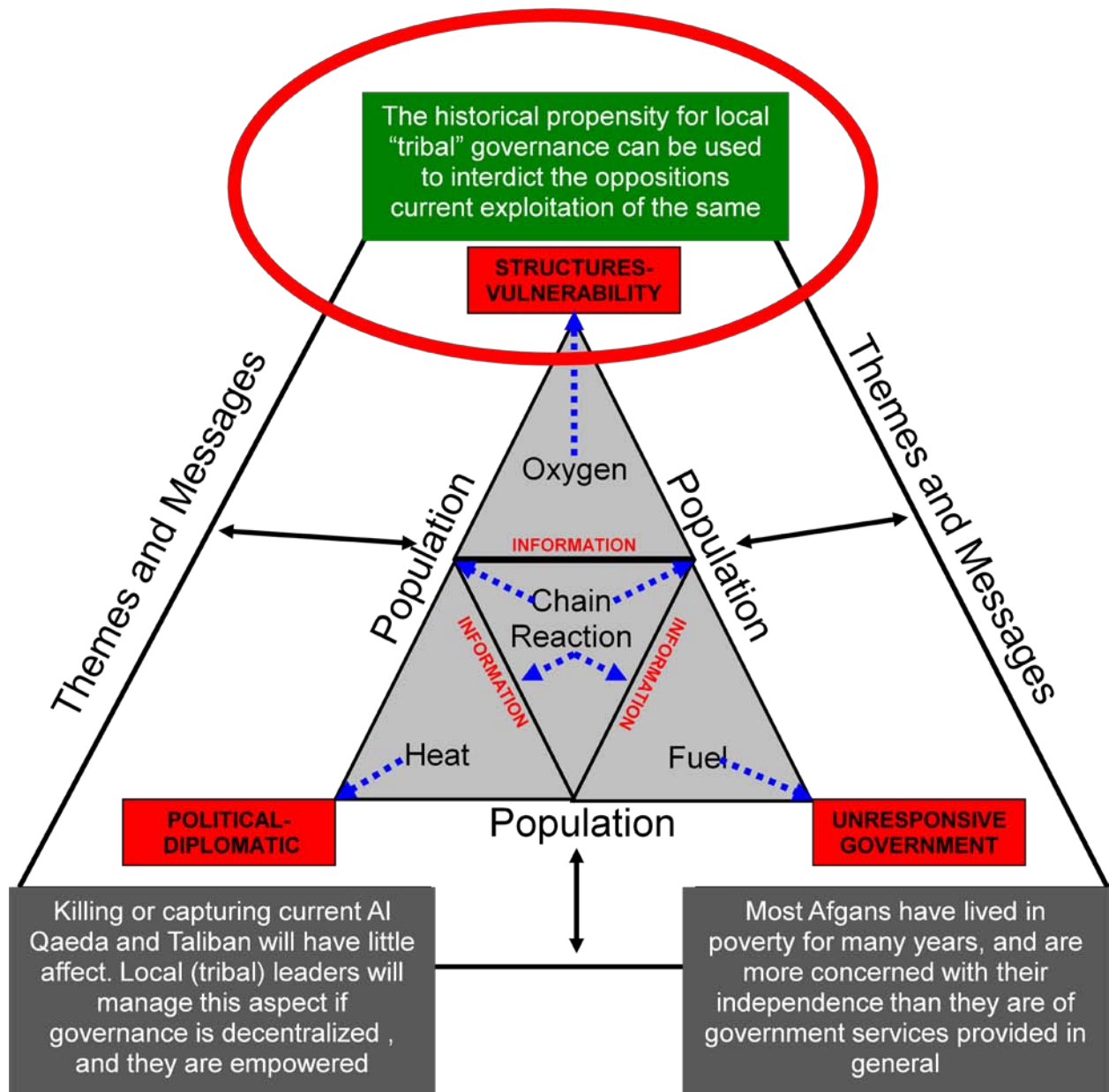
FIGURE 4: FIRE MODEL SOLUTION DEVELOPED, AFGHANISTAN[141]

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[141] Developed by author.

**Connector Elements**

Information: The information war is very critical to the success or failure of the COIN mission. The U.S. and its allies must go on the offense to ensure they are first with the message, and that the Taliban and their associated movements are reacting to a message that will be difficult to respond to.

There are opportunities for friendly information operations to overtake enemy IO in several areas. First, are the true divisions between the tribal leaders that made agreements with the Taliban leadership due to threat or convenience. This can be remedied through empowerment, funding, and ideological posturing with the right messages within Afghan media. Secondly, the Taliban utilizes the drug trade as a means of both control and funding (see the Taliban Franchise Model above). Islam diametrically opposes this. Therefore, this cleavage needs to be exploited. Thirdly, the U.S. must put the face of the national and local governments working together, and get out of the business of showing the U.S. or NATO doing everything. The Afghans know where the money is coming from, they want to see that their government take the lead. Lastly, the violence in Afghanistan can be attributed to one thing: The Taliban. Every mission, and every public engagement needs to reinforce this message.

Population: Most traditional COIN theorists would agree that counterinsurgents do not need to win the support of the entire populace to be successful in COIN, but they do need to win enough of them in order to have sufficient support for the government to continue to stay in power. When a counterinsurgent looks at what most Afghans want, and how they usually (historically) obtain it, it is usually through the local tribal system. The national government can be a conduit for incoming aid, a big brother, rather than a parent, in the since that the national government will ensure the fairly administer the rule of law, and provide for a national army to secure them in times of need.

The populace at the village level is ultimately where the final act of the COIN fight is won or lost. Therefore, the counterinsurgent cannot consider the populace without considering the thousands of displaced persons along the border areas. If these areas are managed properly, and a real effort to reintegrate them into governed villages is initiated, it could end up being a significant number of people,

currently considered the "Napa Valley" of insurgent recruitment, which can be brought over to the government's side. There can be a concerted effort to have the several tribal leaders welcome them back with assistance from the national and international government. This could be a significant IO event. Especially considering that land management is a major cause of conflict between the tribes.[142]

## Contain

Considerations for containing an insurgency must be made while developing responses for that insurgency. If the counterinsurgent is able to quickly respond to the source of the insurgency, containment is less critical. In Afghanistan the counterinsurgents have three containment considerations; 1) Refugee camps: Can counterinsurgents contain the insurgency within the borders of Afghanistan if those borders are porous and many of the enemy move back and forth? In Afghanistan, these ungoverned areas will not need to be addressed now, because they fall within areas that are under the influence of leaders that can contain those insurgent elements that need freedom of movement. 2) Terrain: Will the terrain aid or hinder COIN operations? The terrain in Afghanistan can be considered an advantage to the counterinsurgent due to the fact that the problem areas are somewhat segregated from the rest of the country-specifically the north and west. 3) Ethnicity: The counterinsurgents must mass their efforts in the southeast, but maintain the current violence levels in the north and west. This insurgency seems to be driven along the Pashtun belt, therefore containing it would not be that difficult.

## Summary

Re-empowering the village leaders will eliminate the opposition's main tool for recruitment (based on the Taliban model), and sustainment of the oppositions growth. The tribal leaders can be empowered to: 1) Manage local police forces, therefore having a stake in their own security; 2) Manage and develop their own school districts, with oversight and funding from the national government, thus

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[142] Human Terrain System, "My Cousin's Enemy is My Friend: A Study of Pashtun "Tribes" in Afghanistan." Whitepaper, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Afghanistan Research Reachback Center, September 2009, 17.

having input into the educational needs of their community; and 3) Utilize the local Jirga[143] to apply the rule of law in accordance with national guidance,[144] thus ensuring speedy application of justice and synchronization of police, security and accountability.

The other elements of the Fire collateral issues that can be fixed with a concentration on local governance. Additionally, considering the insurgency is primarily Pastun instigated and sustained, the counterinsurgents can have an economy of force operation in those areas north and west that will require fewer resources while focusing on the Pashtu south and east.

The crux of the idea that local governance should be the main effort for making the insurgency in Afghanistan unsustainable is that local village governance is critical to winning over the population from the village outward. In any COIN effort, how you get the support of the people is most critical, and in Afghanistan, the local leaders (to include warlords) and tribal leaders have traditionally controlled the people. Therefore, focusing on local government structure and capabilities will put the system back in balance, with the minority elements protected by the potential within the Afghan society, instilled in a freely elected national government who will remember the code that most Afghans live by- Pastunwali.

The insurgency in Afghanistan has reached the stage at which the government must implement a more decentralized power-sharing plan. It is obvious that the opposition has understood the history of the country, and the traditions, and has been exploiting the counterinsurgents inability to seize the imitative to move the country ahead, while preserving the Afghans most treasured tradition: local governance.

It is critical that that the power-sharing plan be well thought out, and consider the best way to balance the need and desire for local governance with the need for national control of those instruments

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[143] A loya jirga is a political meeting usually used to choose leaders, and decide important political matters and disputes. Although primarily used in the Pashtun areas in east and southeastern Afghanistan, there are forms of this throughout Afghanistan. Author obtained this information while in Afghanistan in 2002.

[144] Having the ability to provide for their local communities has historically been the propensity of the tribal leadership in Afghanistan. However, considering the geography, the segregation of the various ethnic groups, the national government has an important role in the future potential of Afghanistan. Additionally, the national government has an important role in border security, coordinating international aid and agreements, ensuring equal application of the rule of law, and guaranteeing a more holistic approach to the long-term stability of Afghanistan itself. From the Seminar 9 environmental frame, 2009.

that guarantee equality for all in a society that is so diverse, such as border security and national defense. The Afghans have demonstrated in the past their desire for national unity, so it is well within their propensity, and well within reach.

# CHAPTER 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

*"It is one thing to have the key; it is an entirely different matter to force another to use it to unlock a door through which he does not wish to enter."*

-Benjamin C. Schwarz

Rand Report: COIN Doctrine in El Salvador

The purpose of this monograph was to look at a new model that will aid U.S. support to COIN operations in an environment different from that for which current U.S. doctrine was created. The U.S. does not have to do everything within its national and international power and use every possible resource it can to make an insurgency unsustainable because those elements of national power may not actually address the root cause of the insurgency.

The key ingredient for any COIN methodology to work is to develop a very well grounded environmental frame, as that sets the conditions for all future decisions whether it be the Fire Model of Insurgency, or some other approach to COIN. Second, the problem frame, or problem identification, identifies those tensions within the system that a counterinsurgent must address. More importantly, it gives the counterinsurgent the ability to see what is desired (based on political considerations), what the enemy desires (based on a grounded environmental frame), and attempts to address these tensions in relation to the "real" problem, not "some" problem. Therefore, these design concepts are more than complimentary to the Fire Model of Insurgency. They are essential.

Like any new concept or plan, the true answer can only be found upon implementation and follow up. For example, if one was to look at why a typical marriage failed, it was most likely due to one issue at the beginning that eventually grew to infect other less important issues. That is the case of the insurgency in Afghanistan. What started as a simple grievance by the small disaffected group named the Taliban (who were deposed from power), grew into a multi-grievance, cross-cultural cause that was born out of inability by the government to solve the basic need of the population after the war: security. Therefore, by not originally understanding the root cause, by investing in areas that do not affect the root

cause, by building unrealistic expectations,[145] by moving the historical propensity of the Afghan tribal system into another direction, and by not knowing how to use information to their advantage, the counterinsurgents are being forced to increase forces to make up for lost ground.

The "Fire Model of Insurgency" gives us a simple way of looking at the causes of an insurgency in that it is similar to how a firefighter looks at the causes of fire. Like a fire, there are many causes of an insurgency, each one unique in its own right; however, there are some basic principles that can be applied to extinguish it. The key concept prior to the insurgency breaking out is prevention- as with a fire, the best way to address insurgent issues is by preventing them before they occur.

The U.S. can apply the Fire Model of Insurgency even in the advanced stages of an insurgency. However, like most COIN efforts, the earlier they are applied the better, because the more time an insurgency has to grow, the more complex the environment becomes. As insurgencies develop due to poor COIN methods, the COIN force is limited in its response, and may be forced into what the Sri Lanka government was forced to do; pursue total destruction of the insurgent base,[146] which is extremely costly in blood, treasure, and will, besides being exceedingly difficult to accomplish in terrain that is not easily isolated..

The results mean the U.S. must rethink and reframe its understanding of the causes of insurgencies, and develop responses that are not a just a template from an earlier version of similar incidents. The Fire Model combines the most critical areas for intervention based on history and current

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[145] LinkTV, Moasic News, Contained in a transcript from an interview with an unidentified resident in Sadar City by unknown reporter. The first male interviewed stated, "We have not seen any of the money pledged to the province." A second male interviewed stated, The streets are not paved, the city sewer lines are old and run down…" This demonstrates the frustration by many Afghans by promises not being followed through with. These Afghans may end up assisting the enemy over frustration. http://linktv.org/scripts/episode_transcript.php?episode=mor (accessed June 15, 2009).

[146] The Jamestown Foundation, China Brief, *"Sri Lanka: Beijing's Growing Foothold in the Indian Ocean"*, Volume IX, Issue 12, June 12, 2009, pg. 7, "The total annihilation of this separatist group brought an end to a civil war that lasted over two decades."

trends, keeping in mind the importance of both the populace, and the information environment that can sustain or quell an insurgency.

This monograph suggested that having unlimited resources does not guarantee victory if the wrong problem is being addressed. Additionally, numerous resources in and of themselves are not the solution; rather, how they are used is most important. The Principals of War are enduring, and all COIN operators must look at those principles that apply. Finally, a COIN force can focus on one element of the insurgency and make that insurgency unsustainable.

This concept conflicts with many COIN practitioners, but it is time that we re-examine how we fight insurgencies, and look at alternatives that will get counterinsurgents thinking again. This monograph demonstrated that counterinsurgents do not need to be everywhere and do everything. If counterinsurgents try to do so, they will be everywhere, yet nowhere.

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